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THE VARĀHA-PURĀṆA

Translated and Annotated by

S. VENKITASUBRAMONIA IYER

PART I

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS
PRIVATE LIMITED • DELHI

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

The present Volume contains the *Varāha Purāṇa* Part I (Chapters 1-136) *in English Translation.* This is the thirtyfirst volume in the Series on *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology.*

The project of the series was planned in 1970 by Lala Sundar Lal Jain of Messrs Motilal Banarsidass, with the purpose to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium, viz. English. Hitherto, the English translations of eight Purāṇas, namely Śiva, Liṅga, Bhāgavata, Garuḍa, Nārada, Kūrma, Brahmāṇḍa and Agni have been published and released for sale.

In this scheme, the Old Sanskrit Texts of the Purāṇas as printed by the *Veṅkaṭeśvara Press and published by Khemarāja Śrī-kṛṣṇadass* have been rendered into English. Translation is neither too literal nor too free. Care has been taken to maintain balance between the two extremes. The spirit of the Original Sanskrit text has been preserved in translation without violating the idiom of English language.

The Purāṇas are classified as Vaiṣṇava, Brāhma, or Śaiva according to the degree of quality, sattva, rajas or tamas which they possess in prominence. Judged by this standard the present Purāṇa belongs to the Viṣṇuite class. Majority of the verses relate to Viṣṇuite rituals, stotras or anecdotes. The Purāṇa eulogizes the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu and proclaims that a devotee attains identity with the lord by reciting and listening to his praise. A number of chapters describe the initiation of devotees to Viṣṇuite order. The Purāṇa prescribes initiation not only for the Brāhmaṇas but also for the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras.

The Purāṇa records a number of religious vows which a devotee should observe at certain holy places for attaining his desire. Mention may be made in this context of Dvādaśī Vrata observed on the twelfth day of the bright fortnight of each month of the year, the ritual being related to the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, Padmanābha being the eleventh and Dharaṇi (Earth) the twelfth. The Purāṇa contains a number of hymns in praise

of Viṣṇu, addressed to his specific forms, under particular names such as Matsya, Varāha and Kūrma. There is a hymn in prose called Brahmapāramaya stotra which was uttered by the Aśvins in praise of Viṣṇu.

Though predominantly Viṣṇuite in character, the Purāṇa talks highly of lord Śiva, discribing his origin, exploits, the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice in particular. The Purāṇa is emphatic about the identity of Trinity, a single entity assuming manifold forms such as Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva and others.

Beside the worship of Trinity we find the cult of Mother Goddesses as the distinct feature of this work. These Mothers are allied to Śiva and their origin is traced to the fury of Śiva, the purpose being the destruction of asuras.

In the miscellany of topics we can include the glory and greatness of holy centres, gifts of cows, enumration of sins and their expiation, causes of sufferings in hell and of enjoyment in heaven. Finally this Part describes Śrāddhakalpa (the institution of obsequial rites and rituals).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OBLIGATIONS

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R. N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. S. Venkitasubramonia Iyer, Professor of Sanskrit (Retired), University of Kerala, for his critical Introduction, lucid translation and useful notes. We also thank those persons who have offered suggestions for improving the same.

—*Editor*

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PART I

ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)-Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, (MLBD), Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC.	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka; Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI.	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Orienta Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*—Hastings.
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa* Ed. R. S. Bhattacharya Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust) Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edt. Bombay, also Kashiraj Trust Edt., Varanasi 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP.	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	*Monier Williams Sk. English Dictionary* MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP.	*Nāradiya or Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvar Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Puranic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs* R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā*—Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

INTRODUCTION

The *Varāhapurāṇa* is an old Purāṇa considered as a major Purāṇa (*mahāpurāṇa*) in the accounts given in the Purāṇas themselves. But although it states in an early chapter the five general characteristics of a Purāṇa (*pañcalakṣaṇa*), it itself does not contain all these, a feature which it shares with several other Purāṇas. It, of course, contains an account of the first two, namely primary creation and secondary creation (*sarga* and *pratisarga*), but contains very little of the others (*vaṁśa, manvantara* and *vaṁśānucarita*). It is full of religious and theological matters and glorification of the gods, mainly Viṣṇu, and of the holy tīrthas and rules for the observance of various vows. Nevertheless, it is an old Purāṇa in its essential parts, though, as in most other works of a like nature, there are many portions added to it from time to time as is evident from the repetitions, inconsistencies and what would normally appear to be irrelevant matter in some contexts. Its date must be early and Wilson's assigning it to the 12th centuary A.D., is arbitrary and unjustified. The earlier parts may not be later than 1oth century as pointed out by P. V. Kane and accepted by scholars like R. C. Hazra, who, however, considers some interpolations to be possibly as late as the 15th century. The work is presented here in an English translation, which is neither too literal nor too free, of the text published by the Venkateswar Press, Bombay, with the most essential corrections. It may be noted that although the work is traditionally believed to contain 24,000 ślokas, the text available now contains only a little over 10,000 ślokas.

The Purāṇa is in the form of a conversation between Varāha, the Boar-incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, and Dharaṇī, the Earth held up by him in his tusk, as given by Sūta, the mythological narrator. The whole discourse is in reply to Earth's questions to the Lord seeking enlightenment as to the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world and what would constitute righteous conduct and virtuous actions for happiness in life and ultimate liberation from worldly existence.

We may make a rapid survey of the Purāṇa dividing it into convenient sections and noting the most essential things in each.

1. *Chs*. 1-8. This is of a preliminary nature. Earth puts her questions to the Lord who reveals to her his universal form. We find the account of primary creation from Vyoma through the Pradhāna and the three guṇas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, to Brahmā, the origin of Rudra, Prajāpati and Svāyambhuvamanu, Rudra's form constituted of man in one half and woman in the other, the division of the male part into eleven and further development of creation from Svāyambhuvamanu. Nārada's narration to Priyavrata, son of Svāyambhuvamanu, of his previous life and his meeting goddess Sāvitrī is interposed. The story of king Aśvaśiras whom the sages Kapila and Jaigīṣavya convince of the omniscience and omnipresence of Viṣṇu and the need to do one's duty for spiritual knowledge and liberation and the king finally getting dissolved in the Lord, follows. We may note that although the chief emphasis of this Purāṇa is on devotion, here we find the stress on *jñāna* as the ultimate means for *mukti*.

King Vasu practising penance and obtaining liberation by reciting the Puṇḍarīkākṣapāra hymn, sage Raibhya performing penance at Gayā and getting liberation by uttering the Gadādhara stotra, the ghost of a Brahmin unwittingly killed by king Vasu becoming a hunter by name Dharmavyādha merging in the lord by his praise of him, are narrated to illustrate the efficacy of penance and prayer. The Dharmavyādha, it is stated begot daughter and gave her in marriage to the son of the Brahmin, sage Mataṅga, but afterwards she was illtreated by her mother-in-law particularly referring to her father being a meat-eating hunter, and, indignant at this, the Vyādha made Mataṅga admit that while he, as a hunter, was killing only one animal a day for food, the sage who prides at his being a vegetarian, is actually destroying numerous potential forms of life contained in the grains he cooks and eats. We may note two things in this story, one, the free and formal intermarriage between a Brahmin and a lower caste and the other a defence of non-vegetarianism.

2. *Chs*. 9-17. This continues the account of creation. Lord Nārāyaṇa creates Umā and the syllable 'Om' identified with Śiva, out of which latter arise the seven worlds Bhū etc, the sun, the moon, fire, people of the four castes, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Devas and day and night. The Vedas hide themselves in water, but the Lord, assuming the form of a huge fish, recovers them from the water when extolled.

Durjaya, son of Supratīka, conquers all the worlds including Indra's, but on the way chances to enter the hermitage of sage Gauramukha who offers him and his army great hospitality with the help of a miraculous gem given by Viṣṇu. Wishing to get possession of the gem for himself but unable to do it, Durjaya enters into a fight but his army is defeated by the army that arises from the gem, and Viṣṇu appears there and kills the king and his men by his disc. Distressed at the death of the son, Supratīka extols Viṣṇu as Rāma (the delighter) and attains merger in him.

In answer to a further question about Gauramukha by Earth, Varāha narrates a conversation between that sage and Mārkaṇḍeya in the course of which details relating to śrāddha (propitiation of manes by libation) are given, such as the kinds of manes, the different ways of performing the ceremony according to means, the nature of those who are fit to be invited for it and of those who are unfit, the occasions for its performance, the number of persons to be invited and the form of the different rituals. Gauramukha utters a hymn of Viṣṇu extolling the ten incarnations as a result of which the Lord appears before him and he becomes merged in him.

Sage Mahātapas tells king Prajāpāla how worship of Viṣṇu leads to liberation and narrates the story of the different Devatās residing in the body of the cosmic egg, Hiraṇyagarbha, like Agni, Aśvins, Gaurī and others each feeling that without itself the body will not function and leaving it one after another, but finding Hiraṇyagarbha unaffected being protected by the Supreme Person in his form as the moon (Soma), praise him seeking his favour and the Lord allots them their positions and names and gives them each a form in the world of gods and a formless state in the beings on earth.

3. *Chs.* 18-38. Here the circumstances under which the subtle Kṣetradevatās (the deities in the body) assumed concrete forms are given in the order Agni, Aśvins, Gaurī, Vināyaka, Nāgas, Skanda, Āditya, Durgā, Diks, Kubera, Viṣṇu, Dharma, Rudra, Pitṛs and Soma, as also the significance of the different names and the day in each fortnight important for their worship, starting with Prathamā for Agni and ending with Amāvāsyā for Pitṛs and Paurṇamī for Soma. Much that is seen in chapter 12 is repeated in chapter 33 which is introduced as 'another account of the first appearance of Rudra'. There are variations

in some of the popular stories here. For example, Śiva appears before Pārvatī not as a Brahmacārin but as an old man who creates an illusory shark to catch hold of him and requests Pārvatī to save him by lifting him up by holding his hand. In the praise of Skanda by the gods, many terms are with reference to what he was yet to accomplish, but this is explained as due to their knowing already what he would do later. Vināyaka was created by Rudra out of his laughter and in his own form, but changed into a being with elephant-face and protruding belly at the passionate look of Umā on him. Viṣṇu is a form of Lord Nārāyaṇa created by himself for the protection of the world.

Mahātapas gives the names of the fifteen kings born out of the gem of Gauramukha when they would be born in Tretāyuga, pointing out to Prajāpāla that he himself is one of them, Suprabha, reborn. Then, Prajāpāla praises Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa and merges in him. King Dīrghabāhu, cursed to become a tiger for his disrespect to Brahmins, gets redemption by accidentally hearing the name of the Lord. This illustrates the efficacy of the Lord's name even when unintentionally uttered and reminds us of the more familiar story of Ajāmila narrated in the Śrīmadbhāgavata. A hunter pleases sage Durvāsas by the wonderful hospitality he extends to him as a result of his devotion to his preceptor, and gets renamed as Satyatapas and the Vedas and Śāstras dawn upon him, thereby showing that it is devotion not birth, that makes one eligible for spiritual elevation.

4. *Chs*. 39-50. This is devoted to the details of the Dvādaśīvrata with the variations and the benefits accruing therefrom, one in each month starting from Mārgaśīrṣa and ending in Āśvayuja, respectively for the ten avatāras of Viṣṇu beginning with Matsya, the ninth being Buddha and the last one being Padmanābha. For the month of Kārttika the Dvādaśīvrata is called dharaṇīvrata, since Viṣṇu was worshipped on that day by Earth for raising her from the water.

5. *Chs*. 51-67. An account is given of various Vratas for attaining various things like health, wealth, progeny, peace, regaining lost possessions etc, and the Pāñcarātra system of the Vaiṣṇavas is claimed as equal to the Vaidika. The first two chapters in the section, given as Agastyagītā is an allegory on liberation and evolution on the basis of Sāṅkhya philosophy and the

last chapter is another allegory on day and night, months, seasons and year.

6. *Chs.* 68-73. Illicit sexual association and the atonement therefor are discussed in the first chapter in this section and a wonderful experience of sage Nārada in the next. The following three chapters speak of the identity of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā as given by Rudra, and a hymn on Viṣṇu uttered by him occurs in the last.

7. *Chs.* 74-89. This deals with cosmology with the earth as the central point and the seven islands, Jambū, Śaka, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śālmalī, Gomeda and Puṣkara with their mountains, rivers, valleys, lakes, trees, gods and denizens. Mount Meru and the continent Bhāraṭa are given special importance.

8. *Chs.* 90-98. The subject of this section is the Triple Power, the goddess unifying in herself the energies of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva, born at their looks at one another, and this goddess triplicating herself as the white Brāhmī, the red Vaiṣṇavī and the black Raudrī and performing their respective functions in the universe. We get here the concept of the triple energy of the later Tāntric system though not in its details. We also find that, against the popular story, it is Vaiṣṇavī who kills Mahiṣāsura after assuming a fierce form with twenty hands, and not Raudrī. Raudrī gets the name Cāmuṇḍā for killing Ruru, and not for killing Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa.

Then is given an account of a Vrata for Rudra as Kapālin, and the mokṣa of Satyatapas by his unflinching truth and dharma.

9. *Chs.* 99-113. We get here the glorification of the gift of images of cows with gold and gems, together with special objects like sesamum water, sugarcane juice, sugarcandy, honey, milk, curd, butter, salt, cloth, grain etc, each separately and on separate occasions to worthy Brahmins. The deity propitiated by these is not Viṣṇu in all; it is Rudra in some and Pārvatī in one. The special value of the gift of parturient cow is stated, as also the importance of the Kapilā variety.

The last chapter is a hymn on Viṣṇu by Earth praying for lifting her up from sinking in the ocean.

10. *Chs.* 114-121. This constitutes a series of questions by Earth to Varāha on the nature of ritualistic worship and the merits accruing therefrom and the reply stating the rules of obser-

vance, lists of meritorious and unmeritorious actions, the well known thirtytwo major offences in worship, the rituals of idol worship and of the quarters during morning, noon and evening. It comprises numerous moral precepts for a virtuous and pious life. Purity, sincerity, piety and generosity are stressed. Many of the Smṛtis are mentioned here and every one is advised to follow whichever suits his faith.

11. *Chs.* 122-126. The first and last chapters here are in glorification of two tīrthas Kokāmukha and Kubjāmra where death of even minor creatures on Dvādaśī day is declared to be giving them birth as human beings and illustrated by stories. In the intervening chapters the materials for worship and the variations in this matter in the different seasons are given. There is also an account of the *māyā* of Viṣṇu and how everything in the world is carried on by its power.

12. *Chs.* 127-136. Initiation of the devotee and the expiations for offences form the subject of this section. The initiation into Bhāgavatadharma of the devotees with the variations in the details of the rituals for the four different castes and the objects to be offered are described. The importance of the Guru is stressed, who alone can do the initiation. The role of the rosary in meditation is given, as also the desirability of copper vessels in worship. The mode of ritualistic worship is further elaborated in the last chapter.

13. *Chs.* 137-151. The glorification of Tīrthas is continued here. We get an account of great tīrthas, the various holy spots in them, the merit associated with each, the wonders perceptible in many of them and several stories in illustration of their efficacy. The greatness of Saukara, particularly its Somatīrtha, where a jackal became a princess, a vulture a prince and a wagtail an opulent trader, all by mere death there is pointed out. The holy spots in Kokāmukha are recounted, followed by those in Badarī. Tīrthas like Mandāra, Someśvara, Muktikṣetra, Triveṇī in the river Gaṇḍakī, and holy places like Sālagrāmakṣetra, Rurukṣetra, Harikṣetra, Goniṣkramaṇa, Stutasvāmi, Dvārakā, Sānandūra and Lohārgala are then described with emphasis on the Dvādaśīvrata in many of them and connected incidents.

Two intervening chapters are on the value of Lord's service. The importance of service through music keeping awake on

Dvâdaśī day is highlighted by the story of an outcaste being able to liberate the ghost of a Brahmin by transferring to him a bit of his merit so acquired. The rules relating to women devotees during the menstrual period are also incidentally given.

We are told of Viṣṇu seeking boon from Śiva at Muktikṣetra, Śiva incurring a curse from Prajâpati Aurva for destroying his hermitage and sage Sālaṅkāyana getting as his son Nandikeśvara, a form of Śiva. We find two brothers quarrelling over a share turned into an elephant and a crocodile and getting redemption by Viṣṇu's disc, which reminds us of the more popular story of king Indradyumna and his curse. Lohārgala, about which information elsewhere is practically absent, is stated to be situated in a place difficult of access amidst settlements of Mlecchas.

14. *Chs.* 152-180. This is the longest section in the Purāṇa and is on the glory of the city of Mathurā and the numerous tīrthas in and around it, the various gardens, deities and so on with the wonders in each, the benefits they confer, the days particularly sacred in each etc. Mathurā is declared as superior to all other holy spots including Prayāga and Vārāṇasī and the people there to be Viṣṇu himself unstained by the faults they may be having and the sins they may be comitting and as deserving of the respect of all and gifts from them, a statement which seems to be indicative of the possible origin of this Purāṇa or, at least, this bulky part of it, in this region. Its association with the deeds of Kṛṣṇa is naturally highlighted. The efficacy of pleasing the Lord by fast and dance on Ekādaśī day is brought out by the story of a dancing devotee redeeming a Brahmarākṣasa narrated in terms identical with the one stated earlier of an outcaste doing a similar deed by the transfer of the merit of his service by song. The significance of social service by planting trees, digging wells, laying gardens and renovating ruins is brought out in the long story of the merchant Gokarṇa. The list of offences in worship is repeated with the means of atonement, only to say that for all this, fasting and bathing in Mathurā is a good substitute. We also get the story of a servant maid made to release her manes by śrāddha, and also what actions lead to ghosthood and what protection from it.

15. *Chs.* 181-186. This deals with the consecration, and rules of worship of idols made of wood, stone, clay, copper, bronze, silver and gold and also about the worship of Sālagrāma

stones. Worship of idols is sanctioned for all castes but not of Sālagrāma.

16. *Chs*. 187-192. The details of śrāddha constitute the subject of this section. The origin of śrāddha, its significance, the place and time of performance, persons eligible as well as those ineligible to be fed in śrāddha, the various rituals etc, are all elaborately given. There is emphatic prohibition against a bestard being fed in this ceremony even unknowingly. The nature of *madhuparka* preparation and its administration are also given in two chapters.

17. *Chs*. 193-212. This is a separate section quite unconnected with the rest narrated by Vaiśampāyana about the world of Yama as seen by Naciketas who goes there at an angry uttarance of his father Uddālaka, but returns to give a description of it. The Naciketas here is not one whom we are familiar with in the Upaniṣad discoursing with Yama on the nature of the soul and ultimately gaining from him *ātmavidyā*. According to his account, Yama's is a splendid world full of enjoyment for the good souls that go there, but also having numerous fearful hells full of torment for the bad. It contains a hall of justice with the well known lawgivers like Manu, Bṛhaspati, Āpastamba and Aṅgiras as the jury. The supremely virtuous souls bypass Yama but the sinners are never spared and his lieutenant Citragupta is asked to deal with them as they deserve. In the course of a discussion of Yama with Nārada, righteous and unrighteous deeds are enumerated, generosity is praised and the power of chastity illustrated. It is interesting to note that this section contains an incident of Citragupta's men getting fed up with their duty of executing punishments, their fight with the demons called Mandehas who are sent to subdue them by Citragupta and finally a settlement being reached by the intervention of Śiva in the form of a Jvara. This has some similarity with the demands of modern workmen, their strike and settlement and reconciliation.

18. *Chs*. 213-218. This, the last section, deals with the greatness of Śiva as Gokarṇeśvara, Śṛṅgeśvara and Saileśvara where his single horn in the form of a deer was taken out into three pieces and installed respectively by Indra, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. It is noteworthy here that this Purāṇa which is predominantly Vaiṣṇavite in nature concludes with an account of the greatness of Śiva.

The penultimate chapter states the benefits of the recitation of this Purāṇa and the last one gives its contents from beginning to end as it is available now, and is, in all probability, a later addition.

In addition to what we have incidentally seen as worthy of special notice in the brief survey made above, there are certain other matters in this Purāṇa which deserve attention and we may now look into some of them.

We come across the tīrtha Lohārgala which it is hazardous to reach although powerful to remove sins. There is another one mentioned, Stutasvāmi, which also we do not come across in other Purāṇas. The identity of these two is not known now. Both these relate to Viṣṇu and occur in the portions of the work which are considered as its early and original parts.

Numerous Vratas are mentioned mainly meant to propitiate Viṣṇu but not infrequently to propitiate Śiva, Pārvatī and others with fasting, prayer, worship and gifts, and each is taken as capable of dissolving sins, sometimes of many generations in his family and many of them also confer special benefits like health, wealth, wife and progeny. But performance of Vratas without any desire is also recommended:

> *niṣkāma evaṁ vratam asya kṛtvā*
> *naśyanti pāpāni ca tasya puṁsaḥ* (45.10)

what we get more emphatically propounded in the Bhagavadgītā.

Many mantras are prescribed for ritualistic worship in several Vratas, but all are Purāṇic and not drawn from the Vedas and, in some cases, they are not fully intelligible.

Although this Purāṇa is primarily meant to extol Viṣṇu, glorifying his achievements and inculcating steadfast devotion for him, it is not biased that way. Devotion for Viṣṇu is only preferential and not exclusive to that of others like Śiva and Śakti. It aims at harmony and cordiality among worshippers of different gods. True that a fighting between Viṣṇu and Śiva stopped by Brahmā is mentioned in one place (21.53) and people devoted to gods other than Viṣṇu are spoken of as doing so under delusion in another (117.45), but passages proclaiming the identity between Viṣṇu and Śiva are numerous, as for instance:

> *yeyam mūrtirbhagavataḥ*
> *śaṅkaraḥ sa svayaṁ hariḥ* / (9.7),

yo hariḥ sa trilocanaḥ / (58.4), and
na bhedaścāvayordeva ekabhāvāvubhāvapi/ (73.40)

and anyone who draws a distinction between the two, it is stated, goes to ruin.

māṁ viṣṇorvyatiriktaṁ ye brahmaṇaśca dvijottama /
bhajante pāpakarmāṇaste yānti narakaṁ narāḥ // (70.40)

Rudra declares Nārāyaṇa to be supreme god,

nārāyaṇaḥ paro devaḥ sarvarūpo janārdanaḥ (70.14)

and Viṣṇu observes that he and Śiva remain together and worship of the one is the worship of the other too.

ahaṁ yatra Śivastatra Śivo yatra vasundhare /
tatrāham api tiṣṭhāmi āvayornāntaraṁ kvacit //
Śivaṁ yo vandate bhūme sa hi māṁ eva vandate /
labhate puṣkalāṁ siddhim evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ // (145. 108-9)

However, a Śaiva becoming a Vaiṣṇava is instanced by Rāvaṇa who does so when Varāha tells him that, being a Rākṣasa he cannot have the sort of devotion required for achieving his aim. (163. 29-47.)

Śakti is spoken of as the triple power, representing the energies of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā and is extolled in a series of chapters (90-96). In Śauryavrata the devatā to be worshipped is Durgā. We also get worship of Yantras or mystic diagrams, as in Dharaṇīvrata in which Viṣṇu is to be invoked in a sixteen-petalled lotus and as Yogīśvara.

kuryācca vaiṣṇavaṁ yajñaṁ yajed yogīśvaraṁ harim /
ṣoḍaśāre tathā cakre yogibhir bahubhiḥ kṛte // (50.14)

The Pāñçarātra system of Vaiṣṇava theology is eulogised and its follower is spoken of as superior to all others, a statement which bears testimony to its wide popularity. In the Dharaṇivrata the gift of the image to a Pāñcarātra Ācārya is pronounced to be a thousand times more meritorious than to others.

ācārye pāñcarātrāṇām sahasraguṇitam bhavet. (50.18)

Although the food offered in worship is generally grains, vegetables and fruit, the flesh of some animals like the deer, goat and hare and some birds like lāvaka, vārttika and kapiñjala is permitted, probably indicating a primitive practice.

mārgamāṁsaṁ varaṁ chāgaṁ cāṣaṁ samanuyujyate |
etā hi prāpaṇe dadyānmama caitat priyāvaham ||
pakṣiṇām ca pravakṣyāmi ye prayojyā vasundhare |
ye caiva mama kṣetreṣu upayuñjanti nityaśaḥ ||
lāvakaṁ vārttikaṁ caiva praśastaṁ ca kapiñjalam| (119.12,16-17)

In the preparation of offering Madhuparka also, flesh is used (114.27).

Social service is laid down as an important function of the devotee. The value of planting trees, digging wells etc, is stressed. *Iṣṭāpūrta* is important for dharma. Heaven is acquired by *iṣṭa* or sacrifices and liberation by *pūrta* or service to humanity. The provision of trees, gardens etc, and renovation of wells, ponds, parks and temples gain the benefit of pūrta.

iṣṭāpūrtaṁ dvijātīnām prathamaṁ dharmasādhanam |
iṣṭena labhate svargam pūrte mokṣaṁ ca vindati ||
vāpīkūpataṭākāni devatāyatanāni ca |
patitānyuddhared yastu sa pūrtaphalam aśnute ||

bhūmidānena ye lokā godānena ca kīrtitāḥ |
te lokā prāpyate pumbhiḥ pādapānām prarohaṇe ||

aśvattham ekam picumandamekaṁ
nyagrodham ekaṁ daśapuṣpajātīḥ |
dve dve tathā dāḍimamātuluṅge
pañcāmraropī narakaṁ na yāti || (172. 36-38)

The Purāṇa abounds in stotra in praise of various deities. Naturally there is a larger number for Viṣṇu than for others. Among the hymns of Viṣṇu are those uttered by Dharaṇī (1.20-28) the last four verses being a *kavaca*, another by her (113. 18-68), praising him in his universal form, by Nārada (3.11-20), known as the Brahmapārastotra, by Aśvaśiras (5.49-57) known as Yajñamūrtistava, extolling Viṣṇu as the lord of sacrifice and as combining in himself the Trinity, by Vasu (6. 10-16) known as Puṇḍarīkākṣapārastotra, identifying Viṣṇu with the universe, by Raibhya (7. 21-40), known as Gadādharastotra, by Dharmavyādha (8.43-49), by (Waters) (9.28-33), by Gauramukha (11. 11-21) and another by the same sage (15.9-21) known as Daśāvatārastotra, by Supratīka (12. 5-16) praising Viṣṇu as Rāma (the delighter), by Kṣetradevatās (17. 59-63), by Prajāpāla (36. 12-122) praising Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa, the lord sup-

reme, by Dṛḍhavrata (55. 33-43), by Rudra (73. 18-38) and by Rāvaṇa (163. 34-37). Among the hymns to Śiva are those by Devas (21. 68-75; 25. 17-28; 33. 16-24, the last being practically a repetition of the first), by Soma (114. 20-28) and by Nandin (213. 43-49). There is a stotra each for several others, like the one for Brahmā by the Aśvins (20. 27-30), for Vināyaka by Devas (23. 33-34), for Skanda by Devas (25. 40-42), for Āditya by Devas (26. 10-14), for Durgā by Śiva (28. 29-35), for Sarasvatī by Brahmā (91. 9-16), for Vaiṣṇavī in the form as Mahiṣāsuramardinī by Devas (95. 58-66), for Yama by Naciketas (198. 9-20) and for the Dharmadevatā by Devas (32. 20-25).

Buddha is given as an avatāra of Viṣṇu even in an early chapter (3.2) and more explicitly later:

nṛsiṁha vāmana namo jamadagni nāma
daśāsyagotrāntaka vāsudeva /
namo'stu te buddha kalkin vareśa
Śambho namaste vibudhārināśana // (54.37)

As stated earlier, one Dvādaśī day in the year is in his propitiation and the acquisition of personal charm is its special benefit.

rūpakāmo bhajed buddham (48.22).

The importance of the preceptor in formal initiation into devotion and ritualistic worship is stressed, but strangely it is carried to the indulgent extent of permitting him to be not learned or good-natured.

avidyo vā savidyo vā gurureva janārdanaḥ /
mārgastho vāpyamārgastho gurureva parā gatiḥ // (50.20)

A devotee seeking initiation should be tested for one year as to his way of life and true eligibility.

brāhmaṇakṣatriyaviśām bhaktānāṁ tu parikṣaṇam /
saṁvatsaraṁ guruḥ kuryāt jātiśaucakriyādibhiḥ // (99.15)

The performance of Śrāddha is given great importance and the right mental disposition, necessary money, the purity of the persons invited, the proper time, the prescribed rituals and, above all, deep devotion are laid down as the conditions for its fulfilment (13.48), but for one who has not got the means

for this, though he has the mind, a mere prayer to the manes in the open with outstretched hands is a substitute and this declaration is put in the mouth of the manes themselves in what is given the title 'Pitṛgītā.'

> *sarvābhāve vanaṁ gatvā kakṣamūlapradarśakaḥ* /
> *sūryādilokapālānām idam uccaiḥ paṭhiṣyati* //
> *na me'sti vittaṁ na dhanaṁ ca nānyat*
> *śrāddhasya yogyaṁ svapitṝn nato'smi* /
> *tṛpyantu bhaktyā pitarau mamaitau*
> *bhujau tatau vartmani mārutasya* // (13. 56-57)

Various occasions for the Śrāddha are mentioned, including the anniversary in the tithi of the month of the death of the pitṛ, which is the most important in present day practice. Another thing not common in current practice in general, is the feeding during Śrāddha of uninvited Brahmins and particularly saints. Not only is this permitted:

> *prathamehni dvijaḥ kuryād viprāgryāṇāṁ nimantraṇam* /
> *animantrya dvijān paścād āgatān bhojayed yatīn* // (14.8)

but the warning is given that if a guest arriving when śrāddha is being performed is not honoured, the very ceremony may go in vain.

> *tasmād abhyarcayet prāptaṁ śrāddhakāle'tithiṁ budhaḥ* /
> *śrāddhakrityāphalaṁ hanti dvijendrāpūjito'tithiḥ* // (14.20)

The same liberal spirit is perceptible in social relations to some extent. We have seen a hunter approaching a saintly Brahmin requesting that his daughter's hand may be accepted by his learned son and the offer being readily accepted. We have also seen how an outcaste liberates the ghost of a Brahmin and himself attains absolute merger in the supreme. The Lord says that a pious Śūdra devoted to him and performing his duties in right earnest is more dear to him than even the sages.

> *śraddadhāno'tipūtātmā lobhamohavivarjitaḥ* /
> *namaskārapriyo nityam mama cintāvyasthitaḥ sadā* //
> *śūdraḥ karmaṇi me devi ya evam samamācaret* /
> *tyaktvā ṛṣisahasrāṇi śūdram eva bhajāmyaham* // (115. 38-39)

We have noticed in the story of Aśvaśiras the emphasis on knowledge as the means for liberation. Māyā is referred to in

many places but it is more in the sense of power, at times magical power, not generally in the sense of illusion. It denotes, in the main, the potency of Viṣṇu, the miraculous power that activates the world and carries it on. Of the four kinds of mukti, namely *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and *sāyujya*, however, the last standing for absolute merger (*laya*) in the Lord is frequently referred to (5.58; 7.41; 8.52; 12.16; 15.22; 36.10; 98.37; 105.18 etc), and in one place, in the case of Dharmavyādha, the Lord gives him a boon by which he gets merger in Brahman, the absolute.

> *varo visṛṣṭaśca kulasya te mayā*
> *layastathā brahmaṇi śāśvate tava* / (8.52).

Sālokya or residence in the world of the deity worshipped is guaranteed for the performers of various vratas and visitors of various tīrthas, and *sārūpya* or attainment of the form of Viṣṇu is the benefit accruing from some (see 126.233, 137.17, 147.33, 169.18 etc.), a privilege extended even to animals, birds and worms dying in Mathurā (169.34), but *sāmīpya* or nearness to the Lord is not separately mentioned, probably since it can be taken as implied in *sālokya*.

In a pertinent passage the Purāṇa observes that the mythological stories should be viewed as pertaining to two different planes, the concrete and the abstract, the concrete exemplified by the characters figuring in the stories and the abstract by the qualities in them. In the story of the Goddess vanquishing the demon Mahiṣa, she represents true knowledge and he ignorance, and it is the triumph of the right over the wrong and that is its aim.

> *athavā jñānaśaktiḥ sā mahiṣo'jñānamūrtimān* /
> *ajñānaṁ jñānasādhyaṁ tu bhavatīti na saṁśayaḥ* //
> *mūrtipakṣe cetihāsam amūrte caikavaddhṛdi* /
> *khyāpyate vedavākyaiśca iha sā vedavādibhiḥ* // (99.6-7)

In a work like this, the aim of which is the propagation of religious ethics and illustrative stories to establish it, one need not normally expect any poetry. Still we do get a few instances of passages of poetic value, as in the description of night and the lustre of planets, couched in Vaṁśastha metre, in the hermitage of Gauramukha (11.51-61), in the description of Śiva's chariot and equipment with abstract forces and personifications (21.

33-36) and in the description of the rainy and autumn seasons (138. 65-72).

Lastly, we may see what the *Varāha purāṇa* speaks of itself. It is one of the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas and the twelfth among them as known to Vyāsa.

aṣṭādaśapurāṇāni veda dvaipāyano guruḥ /
vārāhaṁ dvādaśam proktam. (112. 74, 76)

It is the cream of all Śāstras.

Yathā ca mathyamānād vai dadhnaścoddhriyate ghṛtam /
evaṁ sarveṣu śāstreṣu vārāhaṁ ghṛtasammitam // (148.21)

The recitation of this Purāṇa in all seriousness is equivalent to the recitation of the entire lot of scripture comprising the Vedas, Purāṇas and other works.

dīkṣitātmā punarbhūtvā vārāhaṁ śṛṇuyād yadi /
tena vedapurāṇāni sarve mantrāḥ sasaṅgrahāḥ //
japtāḥ syuḥ / (99.50)

A king who worships this with his subjects for one year gets merger in Viṣṇu.

yathāśaktyā nṛpo grāmaiḥ pūjayed vatsaraṁ dhare /
sarvapāpavinirmukto viṣṇusāyujyamāpnuyāt //

CHAPTER ONE

Earth's Enquiry about Creation
Benedictory Prayer

1. Bowing to Nārāyaṇa, Nara the greatest Man, and goddess Sarasvatī, may Jaya be narrated.

2. Adoration to the Varāha (incarnation of God Viṣṇu) who lifts up the Earth with ease and under whose hoofs the mount Meru (the golden mountain) tinkles.

3. May the foremost God, Varāha, dispel my foes; who is Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu and the lord of gods; who is the enemy of the demon Kaṁsa; who killed (the demons) Mura, Naraka and Rāvaṇa (*in his different incarnations*); who, in his huge and extensive form, raised, like a clod of clay, by the tip of his tusk, the Earth encircled by oceans and full of mountains and rivers.

Sūta (*the Purāṇa-narrator*) said:

4. The Earth asked the Supreme god (Viṣṇu) as to when, in yore, was she lifted up with force by the mighty god in the form of the boar.

Earth said:

5. In each Kalpa (cosmic age) O Lord, it is you that raise me up. And I do not know, O Keśava (Viṣṇu), your form in the first creation.

6. Again, when the Vedas were stolen (by the demon Hayagrīva), you, in the form of a fish, entering Rasātala (the nether region) took them out and gave them to Brahmā.

7. Again, O destroyer of the demon Madhu, on the occasion of churning the milky ocean jointly by gods and demons (for obtaining the divine nectar), you, taking the form of a tortoise, raised up the mountain Mandara (which formed the central churning rod).

8. O illustrious lord of the worlds, you, again, with one of your tusks lifted up me, the Earth, from the deep ocean when I was sinking down to the nether regions.

9. Still again, by you (in your incarnation as Nṛsiṁha ('man-lion') was destroyed (the demon) Hiraṇyakaśipu who was haughty on account of the boon (bestowed on him by God Brahmā) and who was tormenting the world.

10. Then, O God, you, (in another of your incarnations) assuming the form of (Paraśurāma, the son of (the Brāhmaṇa sage) Jamadagni, made the Earth once devoid of Kṣatriya rulers.

11. And, then, (in another of your incarnations as Rāma, son of king Daśaratha), through your kingly strength, the demon Rāvaṇa was killed by you. O illustrious God, in still another incarnation of yours in the form of Vāmana (dwarf), the demon Bali was bound by you.

12. I do not know, O God, even a small portion of your multifarious actions. (Now), after lifting (me up how do you create and why?

13. By whom is the creation destroyed, and by whom is it protected? By whom, O all-pervading one, are you attainable?

14. How does creation originate and how does it end? How are the aeons (Yugas—Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali) reckoned and why are there four Yugas?

15. Of them, what is the speciality of the present aeon? And, O great god, what is the desire? Who are the sacrificers? Who are the kings? Who have attained final emancipation?

16. Be pleased to tell me all this briefly. Being asked thus, the great God in the form of the boar laughed.

17-18. In the belly of that laughing lord, the Mother World saw the (eleven forms of God) Rudra, the several gods (Devas), the (deities called) Vasus, the groups of (semi-divine beings) Siddhas, the great sages, the seven worlds, the sun, the moon and planets and the inhabitants therein performing their duties. All this, the Earth beheld with her entire body shivering.

19. Soon after the great God was seen with his mouth opened wide, He was seen by the Earth in His four-armed form sleeping in the great (milky) ocean.

20. While seeing the God Janārdana (Viṣṇu) sleeping on the serpent-bed in the ocean, she also saw God Brahmā (seated) in the lotus-flower (that sprouted) from His navel. The goddess Earth, with folded hands, extolled Him as follows:

Earth said:

21. Obeisance to you whose eyes resemble lotus-petals, you wearing the yellow garment; obeisance to you, the supreme soul who destroys the enemies of Gods.

22. Obeisance to you sleeping on the bed of (the thousand-hooded serpent) Śeṣa and bearing (your consort, goddess) Lakṣmī on your chest; obeisance to you, O God of gods, the giver of the final liberation.

23. Obeisance to you bearing the bow, sword and disc; you without birth and death; obeisance to you, from whose navel-lotus Brahmā has taken birth.

24. Obeisance to you with tender hands and rosy lips. I surrender myself to you: protect me, this innocent woman.

25. Seeing you as a boar dark like collyrium all over, O Janārdana (Viṣṇu), I was fear-stricken; and seeing the whole world in your body, I am afraid again. O preserver, now, bestow your benevolence upon me and, O great lord, protect me.

26-27. (May the twelve forms of Viṣṇu protect me. (Thus) may Keśava protect my feet, Nārāyaṇa my shanks; may Mādhava protect my hip, Govinda the genitals ; may Viṣṇu protect my navel, Madhusūdana the belly; may Trivikrama protect the breast, Vāmana the heart; may Śrīdhara protect my neck, Hṛṣīkeśa my face, Padmanābha the eyes, and Dāmodara the head.

28. Thus having covered herself (as above) with the (twelve) names (of Viṣṇu), the Earth uttered, "O illustrious Viṣṇu, I bow to you", and stopped.

CHAPTER TWO

Primary Creation

Sūta (*the narrator*) *said*:

1. Then pleased by the devotion of the Earth resting in his body, Viṣṇu manifested Māyā (the power of illusion) and stood therein the same form of Varāha.

2. And he said: O lovely damsel, why this strange question ?

I shall tell you the subject of the Purāṇa from all the Śāstras (disciplines of knowledge).

3. This verse applies to all the Purāṇas. Therefore, O Earth, listen to it intently.

Varāha said:

4. Primary creation, secondary creation, genealogy, reigns of the Manus (the lords of the aeons) and history (of the solar and lunar) races—these are the five characteristic topics in a Purāṇa.

5. Now, I shall speak of the primary creation from which begins the history of gods and kings.

6. The eternal supreme soul is said to be consisting of four parts.

7. First, I was endless Vyoma (indiscrete in space). Then the principal atomic intellect came out of me. The Intellect was threefold, consisting of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, each of which being added separately with the form of *Sattva*.[1]

8. As *Tamas* predominated in this trinity, there appeared what is called the Pradhāna (the originator or source Prakṛti of the material world). And out of that *Pradhāna*, the powerful Kṣetrajña (the Supreme Soul) arose. From that came out the intellect.

9. From these, next manifested the sense-organs of the world, the causes of hearing etc., with latent elements, O auspicious lady, the cosmic matter was created by me.

10. In the beginning there was only void. Then sound and ether, then air and after that fire and water, and next, O goddess, you, the mother of all beings were created by me.

11. As a result of the union of these,in the earth, appeared an egg with frothing generative fluid in the water. When the egg expanded, I assumed the form of water myself.

12. Having created water and resting therein, I (Viṣṇu) came to be called 'Nārāyaṇa'. In each Kalpa (grand aeon), I, again and again, lie on the water. And while sleeping there, a lotus flower came out of the navel, as now.

13. Then, from the navel-lotus, the four-faced (God Brahmā) came out. I ordained him to create men.

1. The verses 7 and 8 seem to be corrupt. The idea is not clear.

14. Then, I disappeared. And as he (Brahmā) stood brooding over (what I had said), he did not know what to do.

15. Then this mysteriously-born Brahmā became very angry and from that anger arose a boy.

16. The boy was crying but he was stopped by Brahmā. Then the boy demanded: 'Give me a name', and Brahmā gave him the name 'Rudra' ('the crying one').

17. O auspicious lady, he was then ordered by Brahmā: "create this world". Being unable to do that, then, he plunged into water and decided to perform penance.

13. As he sank into the water, Brahmā created another Prajāpati (Creator) out of his own right thumb.

19. And from his left thumb, he created also a wife (for the Prajāpati).

20. In her, the Prajāpati procreated Svāyambhuva Manu. Thus was given the idea of progeny by Brahmā.

Earth said:

21. Tell me in detail, O God of gods, the primary creation, and how this Brahmā (in the form of) Nārāyaṇa, came into existence at the beginning of Kalpa.

The Lord said:

22. Goddess Earth, listen to my detailed description how, as Nārāyaṇa, I created all the beings.

23. At the end of the previous Kalpa, while he was sleeping at night, O auspicious lady, as the quality of *Sattva* predominated in him, Brahmā saw the world empty.

24. Nārāyaṇa is the supreme, incomprehensible, elder even to the old, in the form of *Brahman* (the supreme soul), the great god, beginningless and present in all beings.

25. The following verse is said about Nārāyaṇa, the supreme Brahma, the source of the world and imperishable.

26. "Water is said to be *Nāra*, since it is verily the progeny of *nara* (man). As water is the repose of the Lord, He is called Nārāyaṇa."

27. While, he, in yore, in the beginning of the *Kalpas*, pondered over creation, there arose a creation beginning with ignorance and consisting of darkness.

28. From that great being, came out the five-fold ignorance consisting of *Tamas* (obscurity), *Moha* (illusion), *Mahāmoha* (extreme illusion), *Tāmisra* (gloom) and *Andhatāmisra* (utter darkness).

29. On meditating, he knew the five-fold creation. This should be understood as the *Mukhya-sarga* (principal creation) by the learned.

30. On meditating again, creation of a high character occurred, as a result of which the animal world came into being and it is known as *Tīryakasrotas* (in which the stream of life of the created beings is horizontal).

31. Cattle and other animals of that kind were straying on wrong paths. Brahmā thought that this creation, *Tiryaksrotas*, was imperfect.

32. There took place, therefore the three-fold *Ūrdhvasrotas* (in which the stream of life of the created beings tends upwards) which was of a Sāttvika type and based on virtue. From that, all the gods living in the upper world were created.

33. After making this creation, the creator found that the productions of the principal creation etc., were not competent and he continued his meditation.

34. Then the Lord meditated on the creation *Arvāksrotas* (in which the stream of life of the created beings moves downwards). In the *Arvāksrotas* the human beings were created who were quite competent.

35. They have Prakāśa (abundant light of clear knowledge, internal and external) but (the qualities of) darkness (*Tamas*) and passion (*Rajas*) predominate in them. Hence they have a lot of sorrow and are continuously engaged in action.

36-37. O beautiful lady, I have thus told you six creations. Of these, the first creation was of *Mahat* (intellect); the second was of *Tanmātrās* (subtle elements), the third was of *Vikāras* (being products evolved from the basic *Prakṛti*) which is also called *Aindriyaka*. These three creations were known as *Prākṛta* creations preceded by *Buddhi* (intellect).

38-39. The fourth one was called the *Mukhya-sarga* (principal creation). Immovable beings are principal. The fifth was called *Tiryaksrotas* wherein the animal world was created. Then the sixth one, *Ūrdhvasrotas*, creation of gods, and it was the best. The seventh was the creation of mankind (*Arvāksrotas*) and the

eighth creation was *Anugraha*. That was characterised by *Sattva* (good) and *Tamas* (darkness).

40. These last five creations were called *Vaikṛta*, the first three being *Prākṛtas*. There was also a ninth creation called *Kaumāra* which was *Prākṛta* as well as *Vaikṛta*.

41. These are the nine creations of Prajāpati. *Prākṛtas* and *Vaikṛtas* are the root causes of the world. Thus the creations have been told. What else, then, do you want to know ?

Earth said:

42. Out of the mysteriously-born Brahmā, nine types of creation came out. How did they multiply ? Tell me this, O imperishable god !

Varāha said:

43. First Rudra and other sages were created by Brahmā. Then Sanaka and the rest and afterwards (sage) Marīci and the rest:

44. (Namely, the sages) Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya, great-prowessed Pracetas, Bhṛgu, Nārada and as the tenth Vasiṣṭha, performer of great penance.

45. By him (Brahmā), (sage) Sanaka and others were appointed for the functions of renunciation, and Marīci and others excepting sage Nārada, for those of action.

46. In the race of the first Prajāpati who was born from the right thumb of Brahmā, this world with all the animate and inanimate beings appeared first.

47. Gods, demons, Gandharvas, snakes and birds—all these most virtuous beings were born from Dakṣa's (Prajāpati's) daughters.

48-49. Rudra who came out of the forehead of Brahmā with his eyebrows knit in anger, was in one half of his body a man and in the other half a woman. Asking the fierce Rudra to divide himself, Brahmā disappeared.

50. When said thus, he divided himself into a man and a woman. Then the masculine part divided itself into eleven parts.

51. Then onwards the eleven Rudras became famous as originated from Brahmā.

52. I have thus told you, O sinless lady, the creation of Rud-

ras in brief. I shall now tell you briefly the greatness of the Yugas (aeons).

53. There are four Yugas, namely, *Kṛta*, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara* and *Kali*.

54. Hear from me of the noble and generous kings, gods, demons and others who performed righteous deeds in these yugas.

55-56. Long ago, in the first *Kalpa*, there lived Svāyambhuva Manu. He got two virtuous sons of super-human capacity by name Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. Among these two, king Priyavrata was a great performer of sacrifices and spiritually eminent.

57. After performing many sacrifices munificently, and placing his sons Bharata and the rest in the seven islands (namely, *Jambū*, *Plakṣa*, *Śālmali*, *Kuśa*, *Krauñca*, *Śāka* and *Puṣkara*), he went to the grand Viśālā and performed great penance.

58. While the virtuous emperor was thus doing penance, (sage) Nārada came there to see him.

59. Seeing Nārada descending from the sky like the lustrous sun, the king was delighted and stood up in respect.

60. After giving him seat and the water for washing his feet, both of them began to speak with introductory words of welcome.

61. At the end of these formalities, the king asked the seer Nārada:

Priyavrata said:

62. O illustrious Nārada, tell me a little of the wonders you have seen or heard in this Kṛtayuga.

Nārada said:

63. Listen to a wonder, O Priyavrata, seen by me. Yesterday, O King, I went to (the island of) Śvetadvīpa.

64. There was a lake with an array of full-blown lotuses and on its bank was a girl having large eyes.

65. At the sight of that lovely sweet-tongued girl, O king, I was wonder-struck and I asked her:

66. "O auspicious lady, who are you ? How are you here ? What do you want ? Tell me, O charming lady, what is to be done ?"

67-68. When asked by me thus, she looked at me intently

and stood thinking and silent. Just then I forgot all my great knowledge, all the Vedas (*Ṛk*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*), all the Śāstras (*Śikṣā*, *Kalpa*, *Nirukta*, *Chandas*, *Vyākaraṇa* and *Jyotiṣa*), Yogas (psychic disciplines) Śikṣā (physical discipline) Smṛtis (codes of conduct) and all the rest.

69-70. By merely looking at me, O king, all this was taken away by the girl within a moment. Struck with wonder and full of anxiety and sorrow, then, I went near her and begged for her kindness. As I was beholding her, O king, a divine person appeared on her body.

71. And, in the heart of that person another one appeared, and on the breast of the latter appeared another with reddish eyes and lustrous like the twelve suns.

72. Thus three men were seen on the body of that lady. At the next moment, O righteous king, only the girl was seen, and not the men.

73. Then I asked that illustrious girl: "How are my Vedas lost? Tell me, O auspicious lady, the reason for this."

The girl said:

74. "I am Sāvitrī, the mother of all the Vedas. Since you did not know me, you lost the Vedas."

75. When thus told, I asked her in wonder: "O beautiful lady, tell me who are these men".

The girl said:

76. "This beautiful one, residing in my body, with all his (six) *aṅgas*, is known as *Ṛgveda*. This Veda is Nārāyaṇa himself. Soon after its utterance, it becomes verily a fire to burn all sins.

77. He, whom you saw in his heart, is the mighty Brahmā in the form of *Yajurveda*.

78-79. He who was seen in his heart, resplendent and pure, is called *Sāmaveda*, manifested in the form of Rudra. This Veda, when recited, destroys sins like the sun.

80. These three great Vedas are, O sage, the three great gods. These are the letters beginning with 'a'. It is here, O Dvija (twice-born), all the sacrifices dwell.

81. O best of the Brahmins, I have told you all this in brief.

Now take back, O Nārada, your Vedas, Śāstras and your omniscience.

82. In this lake of the Vedas, O great Brahmin, take your bath. After this bath, O good sage, you will recollect all the things of the other births."

83. Saying this, O king, the girl disappeared. Having taken bath in that lake, I have come here to see you.

CHAPTER THREE

Birth of Nārada

Priyavrata said:

1. Tell me, O divine sage, all your doings in the other birth. I am deeply interested to know them.

Nārada said:

2. When I bathed in the lake of Vedas at the behest of Śāvitrī (the mother of Vedas), O great king, I got memory of my doings in numerous previous lives. Listen to the happenings in my past life.

3-4. In the *Kṛtayuga*, in the country named Avanti, I was born as a Brahmin by name Sārasvata, very intelligent, well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, served by many attendants and possessing a lot of wealth.

5. Then, in solitude, I thought: "What shall I do with (material) things that are (mainly) pairs of opposites (like good and evil, cold and heat, etc.)? So, giving all this to my sons, I shall go to the lake Sārasvata with determination to perform penance."

6. Having thought thus, I propitiated Viṣṇu with rituals, the manes with *Śrāddhas*, and the gods and men with sacrifices.

7. Then, I went to the lake Sārasvata with full resolve to perform penance.

8. Reaching there, I worshipped Viṣṇu, auspicious and primordial spirit, uttering (the sacred name) 'Nārāyaṇa' with great devotion.

9. When I recited the great hymn (by name) *Brahmapāra*, O king, the Lord was pleased and he appeared before me.

Priyavrata asked:

10. I wish to hear, O excellent sage, the nature of the (hymn) *Brahmapāra*. Be pleased to tell me this clearly, O divine sage.

Nārada replied:

11. I bow to Viṣṇu, who is higher than the highest, farther than the farthest, the most powerful, the eternal and the refuge of all.

12. I bow to the illustrious Lord Viṣṇu, the eternal, the incomparable, the ancient, the farthest, the most effulgent, the foremost among the most intelligent.

13. With pure mind I extol Nārāyaṇa, the highest, the Supreme, the important, the great refuge, pure and extensive, and the Almighty.

14. May the stainless and ancient Nārāyaṇa protect me. He who, in yore, created this *Pura* (body) namely *Prakṛti* and residing therein, has become known as *Puruṣa* (spirit).

15. I always extol Viṣṇu, the great and auspicious, of endless form, the most ancient, the foremost among the just, possessing fortitude and peace and the lord of earth.

16. I extol the great immortal god Nārāyaṇa, possessing thousand heads and numerous feet and hands, having the sun and the moon as his eyes, and sleeping in the milky ocean.

17. I bow to the immeasurable Nārāyaṇa, *Triyuga* (the creator, protector and destroyer), who can be attained by three Vedas (*Ṛk*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*), who has twentyeight forms, who stands firmly in *Triśukla* (the sacred combination of three days, namely *Uttarāyaṇa*, the day of gods; the bright-half of the moon, the day of the manes; and the day-time), who is divided into three sacred fires (*Dakṣiṇa*, *Gārhapatya* and *Āhavanīya*), who can be seen by the three qualities (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and who has three eyes.

18. I bow to Viṣṇu, the ancient one, who is white in *Kṛtayuga*, red in *Tretāyuga*, yellow in *Dvāparayuga* and black in *Kaliyuga*.

19. I bow to Him who has the world as his body and who created Brahmins (the caste of priests) from his mouth, Kṣatriyas (the caste of kings) from his breast, Vaiśyas (the caste of merchants etc.) from his thighs and Śūdras (the caste of servants) from his feet.

20. I bow to the immeasurable Nārāyaṇa, the supreme entity, the highest of the highest, the lord of fighters, who took the form of Kṛṣṇa with a purpose, and who holds in the hands mace, sword and nectar".

21. Thus extolled by me the god was pleased and several times asked me in a voice majestic like the rumbling of clouds, to seek a boon. I sought the union with Him.

22. Having heard this the eternal god told me: "O Brahmin, attain the original nature. That will lead to the aim.

23. Water is *Nāra*. You give it to the manes. Therefore your name will be 'Nārada'.'

24. Saying thus, the god immediately disappeared. Then after doing penance for a long time I gave up my body and got dissolved into the *Brahmaloka* (the world of the creator) and rose there, O king.

25-26. Then the day was created along with ten sons. It is the beginning of the day of the mysteriously-born god Brahmā, no doubt, with the creation of all the gods and others. This is the creation of all the worlds by the prowess of the lord.

27. This is my previous birth, O King, about which you asked me.

28. Since by meditating on Nārāyaṇa, I attained greatness, you also, O best of kings, be a devotee of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER FOUR

Greatness of Nārāyaṇa

Earth said:

1. Tell me whether this illustrious Nārāyaṇa, the supreme soul and the eternal, is God in all respects or not.

Varāha replied:

2-3. Matsya (fish), Kūrma (tortoise), Varāha (boar), Narasiṁha (man-lion), Vāmana (dwarf), Paraśurāma, Rām. (son of Daśaratha), Kṛṣṇa (dark-one), Buddha (enlightened) and Kalki—these ten are told as His forms, O beautiful one bearing all the beings. These are the steps for those who wish to attain the vision (of Viṣṇu).

4. Even the gods do not see His real form. Hence they satisfy themselves with the forms like mine.

5. Brahmā, the Rājasa and Tāmasa forms establish and sustain the universe.

6. O Earth, you are the first form of that God. The second is water and the third fire.

7. The fourth form is air and the fifth ether. These are His forms. With the controller of these in three aspects, the total forms are eight.

8. All this world is pervaded by Nārāyaṇa. Thus, I have told you this. What else, O goddess, do you wish to hear?

Earth asked:

9. Be pleased to tell me, O great lord, what king Priyavrata did after having been told thus by Nārada.

Varāha replied:

10. After hearing the wonder from Nārada, Priyavrata, giving his sons you (the earth, i.e., his kingdom), divided into seven, performed penance.

11. Uttering the great *Nārāyaṇa-mantra* and his mind absorbed in it, he attained liberation.

12. Hear, O beautiful lady, again, the deeds of the great Lord for the worship by kings in olden days.

13-14. There was a righteous king named Aśvaśiras. When the saintly king performed munificently the Aśvamedha sacrifice and accompanied by Brāhmaṇas finished it with the Avabhṛtha bath, there came the great sages Kapila and Jaigīṣavya.

15. Then the king quickly stood up in great delight and welcomed them.

16. Offering them seats and showing hospitality the great king asked them who had keen intelligence and knowledge of Yoga and who had come there of their own accord.

17. "O great Brahmins, be pleased to tell me how we should worship the eternal god Viṣṇu—Nārāyaṇa ?"

The Brahmins replied:

18. O king, who is this Nārāyaṇa about whom you ask ? We two, standing before you, are Nārāyaṇas.

Aśvaśiras said:

19. "Both of you are Brahmins who are cleansed of sins due to penance and attained great spiritual power. But how do you say that you are Nārāyaṇas ?

20. The great God Janārdana (Nārāyaṇa) has in his hands the conch, disc and mace, and is clad in yellow garment. He sits on Garuḍa (the king of birds). Who can be like Him in this world ?"

21. Hearing the words of the King, the two ascetic Brahmins laughed aloud and said: 'O king, see Viṣṇu (in us)'.

22. Then Kapila transformed himself into Viṣṇu and at the same time Jaigīṣavya became Garuḍa.

23. Suddenly, there arose an uproar of wonder in the assembly of the king.

24-25. Then the great king, having seen the eternal God Nārāyaṇa sitting on Garuḍa, told them with folded hands: "Forbear, O Brahmins, Viṣṇu is not like this. He is the great god, from the lotus in whose navel Brahmā arose, and from that Brahmā arose Rudra !"

26. Then those great sages made a miracle by their Yogic power.

27. (Thus) Kapila became Padmanābha (one having a lotus-flower in his navel) and Jaigīṣavya Brahmā. Brahmā shone on that lotus-flower and the resplendant Rudra thereon.

28-31. The King saw Him who had reddish eyes and who was emanating the lustre like the enveloping fire at the end of the world. And he said: "The lord of the world cannot be seen. This is the illusion created by you, sages. The illustrious Viṣṇu is all-pervading."

As soon as he uttered this, O Earth, there appeared in the assembly of the king, bugs, mosquitoes, lice, beetles, birds, snakes, horses, cows, elephants, lions, tigers, jackals, deer and other beasts, domestic and wild, in crores.

32-33. Dismayed at the sight of this multitude of beings, the king thought: "What may be this !" Realising the greatness of Jaigīṣavya and the intelligent Kapila, king Aśvaśiras asked those (two) sages with hands folded in respect: "O excellent Brahmins what is this ?".

The Brahmins said:

34 O king you asked us how Viṣṇu should be worshipped and how he could be attained. Therefore, O great king, we have shown this to you.

35. The powers of omniscience are, O king, shown before you. The god Nārāyaṇa is omniscient and has the power to take any form.

36. This benign being can be attained by men everywhere. Worship (in any particular form alone) will not be the ultimate.

37-38. But the lord of world, the Supreme Soul, is omnipresent. As he is present everywhere, he can be seen in one's own body through devotion. That was why the form of the illustrious Supreme Soul was shown to you in our body so that you may be convinced.

39. Likewise, O king, the omnipresent Viṣṇu is there in your own body. So too in your ministers and servants.

40. O king, the divine beings as well as the multitude of animals and germs are all Viṣṇu himself. Meditate upon Viṣṇu as present in all beings.

41. Worship Him with the conviction that there is no being like Him. It is the attainment of knowledge, O king, that is revealed to you.

42. Remember the great Nārāyaṇa with full dedication, with oblations, offerings, incense and by propitiating Brahmins. The supreme lord can easily be attained by firm meditation.

CHAPTER FIVE

Attainment of Liberation Through Duty

Aśvaśiras said:

1. Kindly clear my doubt as a result of which I may be able to get release from the bondage of worldly life.

2. Asked thus, the great sage told the king who was the best among the performers of sacrifice.

Kapila said:

3. O righteous king, tell me your doubt so that I may clear it.

The king asked:

4. O sage, be pleased to clear my doubt whether liberation is attained by one who does righteous duties or by one who acquires spiritual knowledge.

Kapila replied:

5. O great king, this very question was formerly put to Bṛhaspati by Raibhya, son of Brahmā, as well as by king Vasu.

6. Long ago, in Cākṣuṣa Manvantara, there lived a great king Vasu, who was a scholar and liberal donor and descendant of Brahmā.

7. One day, Vasu went to the abode of Brahmā to see Him. On the way he saw Caitraratha, the Vidyādharachief, and asked him about the convenience of Brahmā.

8. He said that a meeting of the gods was going on in Brahmā's house. Hearing this, Vasu stood at the gate.

9. Just then, the great sage Raibhya came there and king Vasu was very much pleased at this.

10. He saluted him and asked him where he was going.

Raibhya replied:

11. "I am returning from Bṛhaspati to whom I had gone on some business".

12. At that time the assembly of Brahmā was dissolved and the hosts of gods returned to their homes.

13 Then Bṛhaspati went to his home with Raibhya, followed by Vasu who worshipped them both.

14-15. Raibhya, Bṛhaspati and king Vasu sat down and then Bṛhaspati told Raibhya: "O great sage proficient in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, what shall I do for you?".

Raibhya said:

16. O Bṛhaspati, please clear my doubt whether liberation is attained by one who performs righteous duties or by one who acquires spiritual knowledge.

Bṛhaspati said:

17. If a man does any work, be it good or bad, dedicating it to Lord Nārāyaṇa, he becomes not attached to it.

18-19. O best of Brahmins, there is the well known conversation between a Brahmin and a hunter.

There lived a descendant of sage Atri learning the Vedas intently, performing penance, bathing early in the morning, and worshipping Sandhyā all the three times. His name was Saṁyamana. One day he went to Dharmāraṇya to bathe in the auspicious river Ganges.

20. A big herd of deer was taking rest there. A clever hunter by name Niṣṭhuraka came running there with bow and arrow, like Yama, to kill the deer.

21. Noting the aim of the hunter, sage Saṁyamana forbade him saying: 'O friend, don't kill them'.

22. Hearing this, the hunter said with a smile: "O excellent Brahmin, I am not killing the individual souls.

23. The Supreme God plays himself by the beings. Like illusion created by mantras He works thus.

24. O Brahmin, those who wish liberation should never have ego. Everything in the world is for the sustenance and progress of life. The word 'I' is not good there."

25. On hearing this, the great Brahmin Saṁyamana was struck with wonder and he asked the hunter Niṣṭhuraka thus:

26. "What you say, O friend, is apparently reasonable."

27-28. Then the hunter, who knew Dharma, made an iron-net and placed fire underneath. He then asked the Brahmin to blow into the fuel to blaze the fire. He did so.

29. When the fire was thus blazing, the iron-net, with flames spreading through its holes, shone like a globe of arrows.

30. Though the fire was only on a single spot, thousands of its tongues spread through the holes of the iron-net.

31. Then the hunter told the Brahmin: "O great sage! please take a single flame within these so that I may destroy all the remaining ones".

32. Saying this, he poured a pot of water on it and the entire fire subsided.

33. Then the hunter told the saintly Brahmin: "O lord; please give me the flame which you have just taken from the fire, so that I may roast the flesh for my food."

34. Being told thus, the Brahmin went there and looked at the iron-net. But there was no flame since its base was fully extinguished.

35. Then, as the Brahmin stood perplexed and silent, the hunter told him.

36. "The fire when flamed up, had numerous tongues, but all of them disappeared when the fire was extinguished. Similar is the case here.

37. The soul (Ātman) in its primordial form is the repository of all beings. When it transforms itself, the world evolves.

38. No one falls who performs the duties enjoined in accordance with the embodied nature of his soul".

39. When the hunter told the Brahmin thus, O king, flowers were showered on him from the sky.

40. The excellent Brahmin saw many an aerial car that were divine, great and jewelled, and capable of going everywhere.

41. The Brahmin saw in all of them the hunter Niṣṭhuraka.

42. With the yogic power to multiply himself, he had obtained the fruit of the instinct of non-duality. Pleased at this sight, the Brahmin returned to his hermitage.

43. O Raibhya, best of Brahmins, O king Vasu, he who does his duties according to his caste, will acquire spiritual knowledge and attain liberation.

44. Thus Raibhya and Vasu who had got their doubt cleared left Bṛhaspati's home and went to their hermitage.

45. Therefore, O great king, you also worship the great God Nārāyaṇa and see Him, identical with yourself in your own body.

46-47. Hearing these words of Kapila, King Aśvaśiras called his son, Sthūlaśiras, and placed him on the throne. Then he went to the Naimiṣa forest, O beautiful lady, and there he pleased Viṣṇu, the sacrificial Man, with penance and the hymn in his praise (*Yajñamūrtistava*).

Earth asked:

48. How did the king present the hymn of Nārāyaṇa, the sacrificial Man ? Be pleased to tell me.

Varāha replied:

49. "I bow to Viṣṇu, the embodiment of sacrifice, who takes many forms like Indra, Śiva, sun, moon, fire, king and Maruts.

50. I bow to the everlasting and extremely strong sacrificial Man possessing terrific canines, having the sun and the moon as his eyes, having year and the two *ayanas* as his belly and having the kuśa-grass as his hairs.

51. I always prostrate before that Janārdana (Viṣṇu) who pervades the sky and earth and all the directions, who is worthy to be extolled, who rules over the world, and from whom the world arose.

52. I always prostrate before that Parameśvara (Supreme God), the embodiment of sacrifice, who, though birthless and beginningless, takes birth himself first in each yuga for victory, though invincible by the gods and demons.

53. I always prostrate before the great prowessed Viṣṇu, the embodiment of sacrifice, who bears pure and white disc (*Sudarśana*), the Śārṅga-bow and conch in his hands to achieve victory, and the abode of Māyā.

54. I bow to the sacrificial Man, sometimes having thousand heads, sometimes having the body like a huge mountain and at other times like an atom.

55. I always prostrate before that sacrificial God, who takes birth as Brahmā, the four-faced, to create all the worlds, as Viṣṇu, the disc-bearer, to preserve it, and as Śiva resembling the fire in deluge to destroy the same.

56. I always prostrate before that immeasurable sacrificial God, who is meditated upon by sages, who is primordial and all-

pervading, and who performs sacrifices for the systematic operation of the wheel of worldly life.

57. When in my mind I place well your 'principle' which is well manifest in my own body, I am of the firm view that nothing other than this is existent, then my mind attains purity."

58. There appeared before the king who finished his prayer thus, a lustre resembling the flaming fire. With firm determination the king entered into that sacrificial God and dissolved himself in Him.

CHAPTER SIX

Attainment of Liberation Uttering The Puṇḍarīkākṣapāra hymn

Earth asked:

1. Having cleared their doubt by the words of Bṛhaspati, what did Vasu and Raibhya do?

Varāha replied:

2. The virtuous king Vasu ruled over his country and performed munificently many sacrifices.

3. Meditating solely on Viṣṇu and doing righteous actions, the great king pleased the Lord.

4. As time went on, the king who crossed the ocean of Dvandvas (opposite things like pain and pleasure, cold and heat etc.) developed in his mind complete detachment from royal pleasures.

5. Then he entrusted his kingdom to Vivasvat, the eldest of his hundred sons, and went to the forest.

6. There was the sacred lake named Puṣkara where Viṣṇu is worshipped by His devotees in the name of Puṇḍarīkākṣa.

7. The saintly sage Vasu, ruler of Kashmir, went there and doing extremely severe penance emaciated his body.

8. Reciting the Puṇḍarīkākṣapāra hymn in devotion, the wise king worshipped the sinless God Nārāyaṇa, and at the end of it, the excellent king became dissolved in Him.

Earth asked:

9. O Great God ! tell me clearly what the Puṇḍarīkākṣa-pāra hymn is.

Varāha replied:

10. "Bow to you, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa (one having eyes resembling white lotuses) ! Bow to you, O Madhusūdana (one who killed the demon Madhu) ! Bow to you, O lord of all worlds ! Bow to you having a scorching disc (in the hand) !

11. Obeisance to Puṇḍarīkākṣa, the embodiment of all worlds, the long-handed, the giver of boons, the great-prowessed, the omnipresent, and the one having the form of both Vidyā (knowledge) and Avidyā (ignorance).

12. Salutation to the primordial great God, who crossed the ocean of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, profound of all gods and having eyes like lotus-petals.

13. Salutation to the supreme God who has thousand heads, thousand eyes, long hands, and who stands pervading the whole world.

14. Salutation to God Viṣṇu, the victorious, the primordial, the repose to all devotees, one resembling the dark cloud, and having a disc in hand.

15. Salutation to the pure, eternal and all-pervading Viṣṇu who has the form of sky and is freed from both Bhāva (existence) and Abhāva (non-existence).

16. O Acyuta (imperishable) ! I can see nothing other than you. I see all these movable and immovable beings identical with you !"

17-18. As he finished this prayer, out of his body arose a person with a small body in blue complexion, extremely terrible, having reddish eyes, and resembling a burning pillar. With folded hands, he asked the king: 'O great king ! What is to be done by me ?'

The king said:

19. Who are you ? What do you want? Where do you come from ? Tell me, O hunter.

The Hunter said:

20. "O king ! in Kaliyuga, formerly, you were the king of

Dakṣiṇāpatha (South India), quite righteous and skilful, reigning at Janasthāna.

21. One day, O brave king ! You with your horses went to a forest for hunting.

22. There a sage in the form of a deer was thrown down on the earth with two sticks by you, although unwittingly.

23. Immediately the sage breathed his last. You were, O king, very happy thinking that the deer was dead.

But when you went forward, on the Prasravaṇa mountain, you found dead the Brahmin in the form of deer.

24. Seeing him, O great king, you went to your palace with a mind extremely distressed and told some one about this incident.

25. As some more days passed, at one night, O king, you got struck with the fear for the sin of killing a Brahmin and you thought: "I will do something by which I will be freed from the sin".

26. Then, meditating on Lord Nārāyaṇa, you performed the sacred Dvādaśī fast.

27. Saying 'Nārāyaṇa is pleased with me', on a sacred day, a cow was offered by you according to religious rules. Then and there, you fell down dead due to stomach-ache.

28-29. I shall tell you why your Dvādaśī fast did not result in good. Your wife, Nārāyaṇī, was an auspicious lady. You called her by her name when your life breath was leaving your neck (and not the name of the Lord).

30. For a Kalpa, O great king, you were in Viṣṇu region. I was living in your body and I know all that occurred.

31-32. I felt, being the terrible ghost of the dead Brahmin, I could harass you. But then I was driven out by Viṣṇu's servants by their clubs and I came out of the pores of your skin. And I remain my own even in heaven.

33-34. After this, when the day-kalpa was followed by the night-kalpa, O best of kings, in the first creation, you were born in the palace of king Sumanas who ruled over Kashmir. I was then in your hairs. During that occasion, you performed many sacrifices munificently.

35-36. I was not released from your hairs by those sacrifices which were lacking in the remembrance of Viṣṇu. But, now, when you uttered the Puṇḍarīkākṣapāra hymn, by its power, I

was released from your hairs and I have attained the form of a hunter.

37. Just sometime before, I heard the hymn to the God with my sinful body. Hence my liberation. Now, O lord, I am changed into a completely righteous-minded man."

38. Having heard this, the great king was struck with wonder and pleased the hunter giving a boon to him.

The king said:

39. As you have reminded me of my previous birth, O hunter, you will be famous by the name 'Dharmavyādha' (a righteous hunter).

40. One who hears this Puṇḍarīkākṣapāra hymn will get the same result as that of bathing in the sacred lake Puṣkara.

Varāha said:

41. After saying this, the king entered into the aerial car. O Earth, then he attained union with the Supreme light.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Attainment of Liberation Uttering Gadādhara Hymn

Earth asked:

1. Having heard that Vasu had attained liberation, what did the great sage Raibhya himself do ? O God, I wish to know this.

Varāha replied:

2. Having heard that Vasu had attained liberation, the great sage Raibhya went to Gayā, the sacred lake of the manes.

3. There he propitiated the manes offering Piṇḍa (the lump of rice offered in obsequial ceremonies) in devotion and performed extremely severe penance.

4. Before sage Raibhya performing great penance, there appeared in an aerial car an exceedingly effulgent Yogin.

5. In the aerial car which was small like a particle of dust, resembling the sun, shone forth a man like an atom.

6. He asked Raibhya: "O sage, with what end in view are you doing penance ?' Asking this, that man swelled himself into a huge figure touching the sky and earth.

7. He found the aerial car which was resembling the sun, also becoming very big and pervading the abode of Viṣṇu (sky).

8. Then, possessed with great wonder, Raibhya prostrated before him and asked 'O great yogin, please tell me who you are'.

The Man said:

9. "I am Rudra's younger brother and I am Brahmā's mind-born child. My name is Sanatkumāra and I am living in Janaloka.

10. I have come before you, O sage, out of love for you. O child, you are blessed all times since you increase the race of Brahmā.

Raibhya said:

11. Bow to you, O great yogin, Be pleased with me. Please shower on me your benevolence, O Yogin, with the body consisting of all the worlds. O great yogin, please tell me what I should do now. Why do you call me the blessed.

Sanatkumāra said:

12. O great Brahmin, you are blessed because you, interested in discussions on the Vedas, pleased the manes by hymns, vows, sacrifices and all kinds of Piṇḍas at this Gayā.

13-14. And hear me, O sage ! There lived in the city Viśālā another king by name Viśāla, gratified and courageous, ruling over the whole country Viśālā. He, who had destroyed all his enemies, asked the great Brahmins what was to be done to get a son for him. Those benign Brahmins told him: 'O king, please go to Gayā and propitiate the manes there by giving munificent offerings of rice for getting a son.

15. No doubt, then, you will get a son, O great king, who will be the lord of the earth and a munificent donor.

16-17. When the Brahmins said this, the king of Viśālā was very glad and he went to the sacred lake and in great devo-

tion offered Piṇḍas to the manes in Maghās (tenth lunar asterism). At that time, he saw before him three persons in white, red and black complexions. He asked them: Why do you look at me intently? I am anxious to know everything. Please tell me".

The White man said:

18. O Child, I am your father Sita (the white) by name, conduct, race and actions. This is my father, the Red, cruel and prone to do sinful deeds like killing of Brahmins.

19. The other is his father, the Black, and the lord of all who are black of conduct and character. It is by this Black one that a good number of ancient sages were killed.

20. Both these my father, the lord Red, and his father, the Black, died and, O child, went to the hells named Raudra and Avīci and lived there for a long time.

21. As a result of my chaste actions I was led to the seat of Indra (the heaven), one that is rare to be attained. It is by you, well-versed in Mantras, I am united with these, who were in hell, by the power of offering Piṇḍas in this sacred lake.

22. O destroyer of enemies, you have offered water saying: "I shall propitiate my father, grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

23. By that word, we are united now, O good child, I can undoubtedly go to the world of manes by the power of this sacred water.

24. By offering Piṇḍas here, both these your grandfathers got liberation in spite of their misfortunes and sinful deeds.

25. The power of this sacred water is so great that even a killer of Brahmins can be liberated by his son through the offering of Piṇḍas in this lake.

26. That is why, I, accompanied by both these, have come here to see you. Now I am going.

27-28. For the same reason, O Raibhya, I am saying that you are blessed. It is very rare to go to Gayā even once and offer Piṇḍas there. You have been always here. What else is to be said, O lord; this is your good luck.

29. Since Nārāyaṇa himself was seen here as Gadādhara (holding the mace in his hand), He is installed in this temple in the same form. O best of Brahmins ! this sacred lake, therefore, is the most famous.

Varāha said:

30. After saying this, the great yogin (Sanatkumāra) disappeared. Raibhya extolled Nārāyaṇa in the form of Gadādhara as follows:

Raibhya said:

31. Bow to Gadādhara, who is extolled by gods, who is forebearing and auspicious, who destroys demons in Viśālā and who destroys, on mere remembrance, the sorrow of the poor and all inauspicious things.

32. Bow to Gadādhara, the primordial Man who is extolled again and again, the ancient, the purified, the great prowessed, the shelter to all, Trivikrama (one having three footsteps in the Vāmana incarnation) and who killed demon Keśin and protected the world.

33. One who prostrates before Gadādhara lives happily—Gadādhara who is wedded to Lakṣmī (goddess of wealth) and thus amply rich, who is extolled by sinless kings, who is devoid of sin and has purified feelings and is skilful.

34. One who prostrates before Gadādhara lives happily—Gadādhara who has the feet like lotuses and is worshipped by gods and demons, who wears a bracelet, necklace of pearls, armlet and crown, and has a disc in his hand, and who sleeps in the sea.

35. One who prostrates before Gadādhara lives happily—Gadādhara, the all-pervading, the imperishable, and the great lord who is white in Kṛta age, red in Tretā, blue in Dvāpara and black like a bee in Kali age.

36. May Gadādhara be victorious—Gadādhara having three forms at a time, who as one born from a seed creates the four-faced Brahmā, who in the form of Nārāyaṇa creates and protects the world, and who in the form of Rudra destroys it.

37. It is well known that all beings are formed of three qualities, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. May Gadādhara possessing all these three in himself provide me with courage in discharging my righteous and spiritual duties.

38. It is the raft of Gadādhara that has protected me who was drowning deep in the ocean of worldly life, terrible with snares of sorrows, and crocodiles of separation (from my relatives).

39. I prostrate before God (Gadādhara) preserving the earth, who being himself the trio of Gods created this world out of his power as in the case of sky, i.e., in Ātman by Ātman, who created fire and water in it and seated himself in the water.

40. May Gadādhara Viṣṇu provide me with liberation—he who attained the form of fish and the like to protect gods and others and who is present in all beings in the form of sacrifice.

Varāha said:

41. When the intelligent Raibhya thus extolled Viṣṇu in great devotion, He clad in yellow-garment, appeared before him in the sky.

42. Then He having a conch, disc and a mace in his hands, sitting on Garuḍa, said in words lofty like the sound of a cloud.

43. "O great Brahmin-sage Raibhya ! I am pleased with your devotion, hymn and by your oblution in this sacred lake. Tell me what you want".

Raibhya said:

44. Be pleased, O great lord Janārdana, to give me the beatitude by which I shall live where Sanaka and others dwell.

God said:

45-46. 'Let it be so, O Brahmin !' Saying this, the Lord disappeared. By the grace of God Viṣṇu, Raibhya became possessed of divine knowledge within a moment. And he attained the world where the great sage Sanaka and others live.

47. One who goes to Gayā and recites this hymn, uttered by Raibhya to Gadādhara Viṣṇu, achieves better fruits than those by offering Piṇḍa.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Life of Dharmavyādha

Varāha said:

1. He who was in the body of king Vasu became a hunter and he lived some four thousand years doing his traditional work (hunting).

2. For his family he killed one beast each day and with it propitiated his servants, guests and the fire (installed in his hut).

3. In Mithilā, O beautiful lady, he used to perform obsequial ceremonies for the manes on every new moon day in accordance with practice.

4. Doing daily worship of fire and uttering truth and sweet and appropriate words he lived a modest life.

5. As he was living thus, a son was born to him by name Arjunaka. He was righteous in mind; performed penance and controlled his passions like a sage.

6. In course of time this intelligent and chaste hunter got a charming daughter also by name Arjunakā.

7. As she came of age, the righteous hunter thought about her marriage: To whom is she to be given in marriage? Who is a suitable man for her ?

8. While he was thinking about this, Mataṅga's son, Prasanna, came to the hunter's mind.

9. Having tentatively fixed him (as a bridegroom to his daughter), he asked Mataṅga: "O great sage ! please receive Arjunī, my daughter, whom I am giving on my own accord to the great-souled Prasanna, your son".

Mataṅga said:

10. My son Prasanna is well versed in all Śāstras. O great hunter, I shall receive your daughter Arjunakā for him.

11. Then the righteous hunter, performer of great penance, gave his daughter in marriage to the intelligent Prasanna, son of Mataṅga.

12. After this, the righteous hunter went to his hut. His daughter began to attend on her husband and parents-in-law.

13. As time went on, the auspicious girl's mother-in-law told her. "You are a hunter's daughter. That is why you are like this. You don't know how to perform penance and how to attend on a husband."

14. The timid lady, scolded by her mother-in-law for such a silly offence, went to her father's house weeping again and again.

15. The father asked her. "O my daughter, why are you crying like this ?" The beautiful girl told him in detail all that happened.

16. "O my father, my mother-in-law scolded me loosing her temper that I was a hunter's daughter and my father had killed so many living beings".

17. Hearing this, the righteous-souled hunter got angry and went to Mataṅga's house which was surrounded by a village.

18-19. The victorious Mataṅga, his relative, welcomed him giving water for washing his feet and provided him with a seat. Then he asked the guest: "Please tell me for what purpose you have come here. What shall I do for you?".

The hunter said:

20. I want some food bereft of life. I came to your house eagerly for this very purpose.

Mataṅga said:

21. There is a lot of cooked wheat and rice in my house. O best of righteous men and great sage, you can eat these as much as you wish.

The hunter said:

22. May I see the wheat, rice and barley. I have to check whether these are the same as I know them.

Varāha said:

23. When he said this, Mataṅga showed the righteous hunter a winnowing basket full of wheat, and another full of rice.

24. Seeing the wheat and rice, the righteous hunter stood up from his seat and started to go but Mataṅga prevented him, saying as follows.

25. "Please tell me, O great soul, why are you going so hastily even without taking food. There is still excellent food here in my house. You may cook it yourself if you like, and eat it. Why not you eat this?"

The hunter said:

26. "Each day you kill thousands and crores of lives. Which virtuous man can eat food given by such a sinner like you?

27. If there is well-cooked food free from living organisms in your house, then I shall eat it since you are my relative.

28. I kill for my family only one animal each day. And even that, after cooking I offer first to the manes and then only I eat it with my family members.

29. You, on the other hand, kill many living organisms everyday and eat them with your family. I think, therefore, this food is not eatable to me.

30. Brahmā, in yore, created all plants and creepers for the purpose of sacrifice. It is sanctioned by the Vedas, that these are eatable to all beings.

31. Long ago, Brahmā created five great sacrifices: Divya (divine), Bhauma (of earth), Paitra (of the manes), Mānuṣa (of man) and Brāhma (of Brahmā).

32. These sacrifices are intended for the good of Brahmins and other castes. For other castes they are fruitful if got performed by Brahmins.

33. A man should eat food only after doing this. Only through this, the food becomes purified. Otherwise the rice and the like are considered to be birds and animals for both the guests and hosts. These are called 'great meat'.

34. I have given you my beautiful daughter as your daughter-in-law. Your wife scolded her that she is the daughter of a hunter who kills animals. So I have come here to test you also.

35. Traditional rites, worshipping gods, receiving guests—nothing of these can be seen here.

36. Therefore I wish to go to my own house to perform obsequial rites for the manes. Unless these are done, I do not take my food even in my house.

37. When my daughter was married by your son, she attained some of his eminence as a result, and that is sufficient expiation for her birth in my family.

38. When your son married my daughter, this decency had not come to you. Now, O sage, it is time for doing expiatory rites."

39-40. With these few words, he rose up and pronounced a curse on women. "Never shall the mothers-in-law have confidence in their daughters-in-law ! And never shall a daughter-in-law wish her mother-in-law live !" Cursing thus, O lady, the hunter went to his hut.

41-42. Then having worshipped gods and manes with devotion, and having entrusted his son Arjunaka with looking after the family, the righteous hunter, performer of great penance, went to the world-famous sacred lake named Puruṣottama. There, O Earth, he performed penance in accordance with rules with a concentrated mind reciting the following hymn :

43. "Bow to Viṣṇu, who destroyed the enemies of gods, who has Lakṣmī on his broad chest, who rules over the world well, who is a shelter to the virtuous, who placed three steps (in his dwarf incarnation), and who uplifted the mount Mandara (in his tortoise incarnation).

44. Bow to Viṣṇu, Dāmodara (one who had been bound by rope by his foster mother Yaśodā), who has seized the earth with his intellect, who is white with his fame, who is black like a bee, who is the enemy of demons, who is extolled by everyone time and again and who protects his devotees.

45. Bow to Viṣṇu, Puruṣottama (best of men) who is seen in three forms, who has a lustrous disc in his hand, who stands on the part of justice, who has excellent qualities, who has the name Beatitude, who is imperishable and who is the preceptor of all.

46. May Viṣṇu protect me praying for shelter, who is the great boar, who receives the sacrificial offerings, who destroys the mischievous, who fulfils my wishes, who has four faces, and who is a mountain for me in crossing the ocean of worldly life.

47. May Viṣṇu, the Lord of the world, protect me who created the three worlds covered by illusion, and who, like the fire, pervades himself all over the animate and inanimate beings.

48. In each yuga, Viṣṇu creates Brahmā from whom arose this world consisting of animates and inanimates and in whom in the form of Rudra all this is dissolved; so He is called Hari and Hara.

49. May the eternal Lord Viṣṇu, provide me with good whose different forms are the sun, moon, earth, air and water and whose form is unthinkable and indescribable."

50. When the hunter uttered this, the eternal God appeared himself before him in a wondrous form. The eternal Lord having

20. Similarly, he filled Satyaloka with the gods freed from re-birth.

After having this creation, the benevolent God gave it the meaningful name Kalpa, the whole thing being his creation.

21. In that cosmos, the three worlds Bhūr Bhuvaḥ and Suvaḥ arise, no doubt.

22. The time when the God sleeps at the end of a Kalpa is called night. Then all these three worlds are subject to turmoils.

23. Night being over, the lotus-eyed God got up and thought about the four Vedas and in them the Goddess of the Vedas.

24. Despite this thinking, he did not get the Vedas because He was illusioned by the sense of sleep. He was in utter confusion.

25. Then seeing them hidden in his own form called water, he thought of entering into it taking the form of a fish.

26. So after meditating for sometime He took the form of a great fish and entered into the water agitating it all around.

27. When the excellent God in the form of the huge fish resembling a big mountain, suddenly entered the ocean, He who had uplifted the earth before was extolled.

28. "Obeisance to you, O God, who is difficult to be attained even by Vedānta ! Obeisance to Nārāyaṇa in the form of fish. Obeisance to you, the embodiment of all the worlds and the lord of gods; Obeisance to you taking the form of the two kinds of knowledge (spiritual and worldly).

29. Obeisance to you having manifold forms like the sun and the moon and having beautiful eyes, and now in the ocean; Obeisance to you, O Viṣṇu. We seek shelter in you ! Giving up this form of fish, please protect us.

30. O God having endless body, this world is pervaded by you. O God, there is nothing here except you. There is nothing other than yourself in this world. We seek protection in you.

31. O God having eyes resembling lotus petals, ether, soul, moon, fire, mind and form—all these are your primordial body itself. It is by you that this cosmos is illumined. Please forgive me if I am devoid of proper devotion to you.

32. O God, this form of yours is contradictory in itself. It is pleasant-speaking and pleasant-voiced and at the same time it is like a mountain. O the ancient and imperishable great God who is the repose of all the worlds, please turn this scorching form into one that is benign.

33. We all seek shelter in you. We prostrate before you terrified by this huge form. There is nothing in this world outside yourself."

34. Extolled thus, the God caught the Vedas with Upaniṣads and Śāstras out of the water and then took his own form.

35. As long as the God bears his own form, this world exists. When the God assumes his primordial form this world is dissolved. When He takes his manifested forms, this world also evolves.

CHAPTER TEN

The Creation and The Life of Durjaya

Varāha said:

1. After creating all the worlds thus, the benevolent Lord, stopped the endeavour. Then the creation, O Earth, is increased itself.

2-3. When the creation was developed, the gods pleased the venerable Viṣṇu by performing devoutly many sacrifices in all the Dvīpas (islands or continents) and countries.

4. As thousands of years passed, the God became pleased and appeared before them.

5. The God having many hands, bellies, faces and eyes and resembling the peak of a big mountain, asked them. "What shall I do for you ? Please seek a boon from me, O gods !"

The gods said:

6-7. Be victorious, O great Viṣṇu ! We seek this boon from you. Even in the world of men, you alone are worshipped by all and none of us is worshipped by any. The moon, the sun, Vasus, Sādhyas, Viśvedevas, Aśvins, Maruts, fire—all these have sought shelter in you. O embodiment of all beings, please make us venerable for men.

8. Hearing this, the great lord Viṣṇu told them: "I shall make all of you venerable". Saying this, He disappeared.

9. The eternal gods also went home uttering hymns in his praise. The great Lord assumed three aspects.

10. Becoming threefold thus the great Lord worshipped the gods, with Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa forms.

11. Viṣṇu recited the Vedas in Sāttvika mood and performed sacrifices to the gods.

12. He worshipped with great devotion Rudra in the form of Kāla (time) having a trident in his hand, in the Rājasa form.

13. And he attained his Tāmasa form in Asuras.

14. Thus the great Lord of the world taking three kinds of forms worshipped the gods. Then the world also became varied.

15. In this manner Viṣṇu established the names of great gods. In Kṛtayuga He is Nārāyaṇa.

16. In Tretāyuga He is Rudra and in Dvāparayuga Yajña-mūrti, the form of sacrifice. In Kaliyuga the God Nārāyaṇa attains many forms.

17. Hear from me, O fair damsel, the story of the great God, the first creation.

18. In Kṛtayuga there lived a powerful king by name Supratīka. He had two beautiful queens.

19. Their names were Vidyutprabhā and Kāntimatī. Though he was very healthy, he did not get a son by either of these wives.

20. So, he offered worship in the prescribed manner to the great sinless sage Ātreya in the famous mountain Citrakūṭa.

21. Pleased at his long and steady worship, the sage Ātreya spoke to him with the intention of giving him a boon.

22. At that time the mighty Indra seated on his elephant accompanied by an army of gods, passed by him without showing him respect.

23. Seeing this the sage got offended and he cursed Indra.

24. "Since you have shown disrespect to me, O stupid lord of heaven, you will lose your kingdom and you will have to live in another world."

25-27. Having uttered this, the sage told king Supratīka: "O king, you will get a son valiant like Indra. He will be endowed with wealth, prowess, and spiritual knowledge and he will be a performer of brave deeds. He will have great strength and will have the name Durjaya". Saying this, the sage went away.

28. The righteous king Supratīka got his queen Vidyutprabhā pregnant. In due course, she gave birth to a child who was very strong and was given the name Durjaya.

29. The sage himself performed the ceremonies in connection with his birth.

30. As a result of the sage's rites, the child became gentle, righteous and proficient in the Vedas and Śāstras.

31. Kāntimatī, the second queen of the great king Supratīka also gave birth to a child by name Sudyumna who also became well versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

32-33. As time went on, Supratīka, the mighty king of Vārāṇasī, seeing his son Durjaya becoming mature and himself old, O Earth, thought that Durjaya was to be crowned king.

34. Thinking thus, the righteous king bestowed on his son the kingdom and he himself went to the mountain Citrakūṭa.

35. Adding to his great kingdom more elephants, horses and chariots, king Durjaya thought about the widening of its boundaries.

36. Thinking thus the intelligent king assembled an army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and soldiers and went to the northern quarters.

37-38. All the countries in the northern quarters were captured by the great king. Then he won over this country, Bhārata. Subsequently the countries Kimpuruṣa, and Harivarṣa were seized by him.

39. Then he captured all the countries around mount Meru like Romāvata, Kuru, Bhadrāśva and Ilāvṛta.

40. After having seized this Jambūdvīpa, the king went to conquer Indra with all the gods.

41. Sage Nārada, son of Brahmā, climbing on the mount Meru told Indra the gods, demons, Gandharvas, Guhyakas, Kinnaras about the victorious advance of Durjaya (over the whole Jambūdvīpa).

42-43. As soon as he heard this, Indra along with the lords of the quarters set out to kill Durjaya. Climbing the mountain Meru, he came to the earth, the abode of mortals.

44. Lord Indra accompanied by the lords of quarters stood in the east. It was then that the wonderful exploits of Durjaya occurred.

45. After conquering the gods, Durjaya made his camp in the table-lands of the mount Gandhamādana.

At that time two ascetics came there to see Durjaya.

46. They told him: "O king Durjaya, all the lords of quarters have been driven away by you. Without them the world cannot get on. So please give us their exalted position."

47-48. Requested thus, the righteous king Durjaya asked them: "Who are you ?" They replied: "We are Asuras by name Vidyut and Suvidyut. We wish the righteousness well set by you among the good.

49. O Durjaya, we shall do all the duties of the protectors of the quarters."

50. On hearing their words, Durjaya appointed them in heaven as the protectors of directions. Then both of them disappeared. O Earth, they did their work well.

51. On the mount Mandara the great king Durjaya found the celestial garden (Citraratha) of Kubera which was like the Nandana garden (of Indra).

52. While he was on a stroll in that beautiful garden he saw there under a golden tree two girls.

53-54. They were wonderfully charming and he stood there for a moment wondering who they could be. Just then he saw two sages.

55. Seeing them the king with great joy got down from his elephant quickly and prostrated at their feet.

56. He sat down and gave them two seats of Kuśa grass. They asked him: "Who are you ? Wherefrom have you come here and what for.".

57. With a smiling face the king replied: "A famous king by name Supratīka was ruling. I am his son named Durjaya.

58. With a desire to defeat all the kings in the world, I came here.

59. O excellent sages, who are you ? Be pleased to tell me your names."

The sages said:

60. We are Hetṛ and Prahetṛ, sons of Svāyambhuva Manu. To destroy gods we went to the mountain Meru.

61. There we won many times the huge army of gods consisting of elephants, horses and chariots.

62-63. Seeing their army destroyed by the demons, the gods, seeking shelter, went to the bank of the Milky ocean where the great lord Viṣṇu was sleeping. Saluting the Lord, the gods requested Him:

64. "O God Viṣṇu, please protect our frightened army defeated by the demons.

65. It is you, O Keśava (destroyer of the demon Keśin) who, long ago, in the war between the gods and demons, protected us from the attack of the eternal thousand-armed Kālanemi.

66. Here also, O great Lord, there are two demons by name Hetṛ and Prahetṛ being accompanied by a huge army and they are oppressing us all. Killing both these, O great God, the protector of the worlds, please save us."

67. Hearing this, Viṣṇu, the great Lord of the worlds told them: "I shall go to kill them".

68. Being told by Him thus, the gods waited there by the mountain Meru meditating on Him Who was the destroyer of the mischievous people.

69-70. Soon the mighty God having a mace in His hand entered into our army multiplying himself into one, ten, hundred, thousand, lakh and crore by his miraculous power.

71. As the mighty God stood in the middle of our army in this manner, every soldier in our army began to fall down dead.

72-73. Thus within a few minutes, our fourfold army having flesh and blood and full of soldiers and flagstaffs was destroyed by the magical power of the God, the embodiment of all beings. Then seeing us only remaining, the God with a disc in his arm, disappeared.

74. We saw this wonderful act of the God having the Śārṅga-bow in his hand. Then we sought shelter in him and worshipped him.

75-76. You are the son of our friend king Supratīka. These two are our daughters. Please accept both these, O great king. Hetṛ's daughter is Sukeśī and Prahetṛ's Miśrakeśī.

77. When Hetṛ said thus, king Durjaya received those two girls as his queens for the sake of righteousness.

78. Marrying them the joyful king returned to his own kingdom accompanied by his army.

79. In course of time, he got two sons by his two wives Prabhava by Sukeśi, and Sudarśana by Miśrakeśī.

80. Having got the two auspicious sons, the wealthy king Durjaya, as he became old, went to the forest.

81-82. As he was living in the forest driving away wild beasts he found a sinless and auspicious sage by name Gauramukha performing penance who was the protector of hermits as well as the sinful men.

83. The sage's penance-grove with ponds full of pure water and with big trees imparting fragrance to the breeze shone like a cloud descended from the sky to the earth.

84. There was in his hermitage fire blazing with flames upwards brightening the sky, a grinder covered by pure white cloths; Säma-hymns sung by his disciples, lovely hermitage girls, and all the trees with full-blown flowers.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Fight Between Durjaya and Gauramukha

Varāha said:

1-2. Seeing the hermitage of Gauramukha, Durjaya thought: "I shall enter this beautiful hermitage and see the virtuous sages". He then entered the hermitage.

3. Delighted to see the king, Gauramukha welcomed him.

4. Then the great Brahmin sage told him, "O great king, I wish to give you and your retinue food according to my capacity. So release your horses."

5. Saying this, the virtuous sage remained quiet. Seeing his devotion the king also stood there with his followers.

6. "Five batallions of the army are with me here. What food can this sage give us all ?" he thought.

7. After inviting king Durjaya for food, sage Gauramukha also thought: "what shall I give the king now ?".

8. The sage who was thinking thus had the great Lord Viṣṇu in his heart then.

9. Then the great sage went to the Ganges and meditated on Viṣṇu and propitiated him.

Earth asked:

10. I am anxious to know, O Lord, how Gauramukha propitiated Viṣṇu. Tell me this clearly.

Varāha replied:

11. "I bow to you (Viṣṇu) always. Bow to you, clad in yellow garment. Bow to you, the primordial Man. Bow to you in the form of water.

12. I bow to you the Omni-present. Bow to you lying on the water. Bow to you in the form of the earth. Bow to you in the form of light.

13. Bow to you in the form of air. Bow to you in the form of sky. You are the God of all beings. You are the Lord reposing in the heart of all.

14. You are the syllable 'Om', the word 'vaṣaṭ'. You are present everywhere. You are the beginning of all gods; but you have no beginning.

15. You are (the world) Bhūḥ. You are (the world) Bhuvaḥ. You are (the worlds) Janas and Mahar. You are (the world) Tapas. You are (the world) Satya. O God, all the animate and inanimate dwell in you.

16. All this world came out of you. The Ṛk etc. came out of you. The Śāstras were born from you. It is in you that the sacrifices are installed.

17. All the trees, creepers, plants in the woods, animals, birds and serpents—O Janārdana, all these are born from you.

18. O God of gods, king Durjaya has come to my hermitage. I wish to treat him as my guest.

19. O Lord of all the worlds, I am very poor and all the same, an obedient devotee of yours. Give me rice and the like (to feed the king).

20. Whatever I touch with my hands, whatever I look at with my eyes—may it be a log of wood or a blade of grass, let all that turn into the fourfold food.

21. Also whatever my mind calls for, let all that appear before me. Bow to you, O great God."

Varāha said:

22. By this hymn, the great God of all the worlds was pleased very much. He appeared before the sage and showed him his real Form.

23. Then the God told him with great pleasure. "O Brahmin, please ask for a boon". Hearing this the sage opened his eyes.

24-26. Then he saw Viṣṇu clad in yellow-garment and bearing a conch and mace in his hands. Sitting on Garuḍa, he shone forth with the lustre similar to that of the twelve suns, why, the lustre of a thousand suns rising together in the sky. The sage, O beautiful lady, saw him with his eyes wide open with wonder.

27-28. He prostrated before the God with folded hands and told Him. "O God, if you are pleased with me, your devotee, and intend to give me a boon, then, please make arrangements in order that this king with his company can stay in my hermitage and take food and then return to his palace."

29. Hearing this, the great God gave him a boon according to which his desire would be fulfilled. He also gave him a shining jewel.

30. The God then disappeared. Sage Gauramukha also went to his holy hermitage with many sages.

31. Then the great sage contemplated on a hundred-storied mansion looking like the peak of mount Himālaya and high up like the huge cloud, and pleasing like the beams of the moon.

32. Then, by the power of the boon attained from Viṣṇu, the Brahmin created lakhs of mansions like this.

33-34. Then he got huge walls around them. Also there came into existence beautiful gardens, pleasant with the charming songs of cuckoos, and full of many other kinds of birds; and trees like Campaka, Aśoka, Punnāga, Nāga and Kesara appeared in the gardens in these homes everywhere.

35. Stalls for elephants and stables for horses appeared there. Many varieties of food were provided everywhere.

36. All kinds of food—to be chewed, bitten, licked and sucked—made of rice and the like and golden utensils for them were seen everywhere.

37. Then the sage told the great king: "Let the entire army enter into these houses".

38. When told thus, the king went to a mountain-like mansion. His servants also went into it.

39. Seeing all of them in the mansion, sage Gauramukha, with the divine jewel in his hand, said to the king.

40. When you want to bathe and have your food, O king, I shall send charming damsels and obedient servants to attend on you.

41. After saying this, the great Brahmin put the Viṣṇuite jewel in a solitary place. The king was watching all this.

42. As soon as the sage put the shining jewel there, thousands of celestial damsels appeared on the spot.

43. Smeared with cosmetics, the lovely ladies attracted everyone with their beautiful cheeks, hairs, eyes etc.

44-45. Some of them taking golden pots in their hands started to go. Thus, men and women followed the king and his servants to attend on them.

46. Those ladies found all the servants taking bath following the king. The elephants were seen walking gently and beautifully.

47-48. When the king was bathing, many kinds of tabors were played everywhere and some ladies danced beautifully and some others sang songs as at the time when Indra was taking his bath.

49. *Thus the great king finished his bath with divine* accompaniments. Struck with wonder, he thought: "How is all this done ? Is it by the power of the sage or by his penance or by this jewel ?"

50. Then, after bathing and wearing fine clothes, the great king took his food consisting of numerous items.

51. The great sage showed his hospitality to the king's servants also as he did to the king.

52. As the king and his servants took their meals, the rosy sun went to the setting mountain.

53. Then came the night, decorated by the grand mark of the autumnal moon. Even though having only soft qualities Rohiṇī's spouse (moon) showed his passion (also reddish colour) proper to the context.

54. The planet Venus (Śukra) rose with strong rays. Jupiter (Bṛhaspati) also rose at the time, but with lustre

suppressed (by that of Venus). The position of all beings is in accordance with their association.

55. The planet Mars gave up its reddish colour and Rāhu its sharpness. The moon's beams were white. The nature of all beings is influenced by its association according to whether it is with the good or with the bad. Nature is the chief factor that imparts strength and valour.

56. Although within the influence of Saturn, Ketu did not spread his dense darkness in that brightness, pure like the sun. If the master is great, then even the bad behave well.

57. The planet Budha, the intelligent son of the moon, shone forth with his actions and smiling at the good.

58. Ketu standing in the path of the moon (also king) and the gods made the sky tawny. In an assembly of good men the bad do not exhibit their tricks in full.

59. The moonlight increased the passion of even highborn wives. The contact of the great rouses the great.

60. The results of the Vedic rites performed were evident.[1]

61. By virtue of the remembrance of Viṣṇu, Dhruva, who in yore, worshipped him, brightened the king's seat by wealth and intellect.

62. Thus, the auspicious night came to the auspicious hermitage of Gauramukha in keeping with the grand reception accorded with sumptuous meals, clothes and ornaments to king Durjaya and his servants and to his elephants and horses.

63. There were beautiful couches in the mansions lustrous with precious jewels and covered by the best silks, and lovely damsels were standing nearby.

64. The king sent his chieftains and servants to other buildings and slept in his mansion in the company of charming ladies, like Indra in the heaven.

65. Thus, by the sage's power, the king with his retinue slept well during the whole night.

66-67. As the night was over, the king found that the ladies had disappeared; so too those huge mansions and their grand seats. Seeing this, the king was struck with wonder and he felt unhappy.

68-69. King Durjaya thought: "How can I get a jewel

1. The idea in this stanza is not clear.

like this ? I will steal this jewel which fulfils all the wishes of him who possesses it." Thinking thus, the king did not feel inclined to leave the hermitage.

70-71. Going somewhere not far away from the hermitage, the king with his horses sent his minister Virocana to sage Gauramukha to request him for the gift of the jewel. He went there and requested the sage for it.

72. He told the sage: "It is the king who deserves to keep jewels. So this jewel may be given to him."

When the minister said thus, Gauramukha got angry and replied to him.

73. "The Brahmin is the recipient; the king, on the other hand, is the donor. Being a king how do you request for this, like a poor man ?

74. What you are telling me amounts to saying that king Durjaya himself is an ill-conducted man. Soon go to that ill-conducted king. May not the people disobey him."

75. Hearing this, the messenger went to the king and conveyed to him all that was told by the Brahmin.

76. Hearing the Brahmin's words Durjaya got angry and called one of his chieftains, Nīla, and told him:

77. "Do not wait for a minute. Snatching the Brahmin's jewel come here quickly."

78. Receiving this order, Nīla, with a huge army, went to the Brahmin's hermitage in the forest.

79. There, seeing the jewel placed in the Agnihotraśālā (the house where the sacred fire is worshipped everyday), Nīla got down from the chariot and stood on the ground.

80-81. While the most cruel Nīla got down from the chariot, numerous valiant soldiers holding weapons, came out of the jewel with chariots, flag-staffs, horses, swords, bows and quivers.

82. From among the powerful soldiers that came out of the jewel, fifteen were particularly valorous and were capable of accomplishing anything in battle.

83-84. O auspicious lady, I shall tell you their names. Suprabha, Dīpratejas, Suraśmi, Śubhadarśana, Sukānti, Sundara, Sunda, Sudyumna, Sumanas, Śubha, Suśīla, Sukhada, Śambhu, Sudānta, Soma—these were the fifteen chiefs that arose from the jewel.

85. Seeing the vast army and its brilliant leader they closely fought with various weapons in their arms.

86. Their bows glittered like gold and arrows were bound with gold in their feathered parts. Their sharp swords, powerful missiles and lances fell (on the enemies).

87. Chariot encountered chariot; so also elephant, horse and foot-soldier of high valour attacked their counterparts.

88. Likewise, abusing each other, the mighty soldiers in the two armies entered the array. Thus the war became horrible producing a flood of blood and deviated from the path of the righteous.

89. In the tumultuous war, the king's minister fell in a swoon and soon embraced death with his army.

90. When the minister died, king Durjaya himself rushed to the spot along with horses, chariots and soldiers and continued the battle with those who arose from the jewel.

91. In the fight the king also faced very many reverses.

92. Then, hearing that their son-in-law was in the war-field, Hetṛ and Prahetṛ brought an army there.

93-95. In that army, O Earth, the leading demons were Praghasa, Vighasa, Saṅghasa, Aśanisaprabha, Vidyutprabha, Sughoṣa, Unmattākṣa, Agnidatta (Agnidaṁṣṭra), Agnitejas, Bāhu, Śakra, Pratardana, Virādha, Bhīmakarman and Vipracitti; these fifteen having strong weapons with them were the chiefs of the demons.

96. Each of them had a large army. These chiefs with miraculous power fought with the jewel-born soldiers.

97. Satejas (Dīpratejas) pierced Vighasa with three arrows. Likewise, Suraśmi struck Saṅghasa with ten arrows.

98. Śubhadarśana shot five arrows at Aśaniprabha. So did Sukānti and Sundara on Vidyutprabha and Sughoṣa respectively.

99. Sunda pierced Unmattākṣa with five arrows and cut his bow with a pointed shaft.

100. Sumanas fought with Agnidaṃṣṭra and Suveda (Sukhada) with Agnitejas. Similarly, Sunala (Śubha) with Bāhu (Vāyu) and Śakra and Sudanta with Pratardana.

101. After a terrible fight in which weapons were hurled on each other incessantly, the demons were killed by the jewel-born soldiers.

102-103. As the fight became extremely terrible, sage Gauramukha came there collecting the Samit and Kuśa grass (for his daily rituals). Seeing the wonderful and horrible war in which huge aimies were fighting and seeing Durjaya standing by, the sage stood near the gate in deep thought.

104. Finding that his jewel was the cause of that huge battle, sage Gauramukha meditated on God Viṣṇu.

105. Suddenly, there appeared before him the God, clad in yellow garment and seated on Garuḍa and asking him what he might do.

106. With folded hands the sage replied to Him: "Please kill this sinful Durjaya and his army."

107-108. Then he threw his fire-like disc (Sudarśana) towards them. Within a moment the king and his army and the demons were reduced to ashes completely.

109-110. After this, the God told sage Gauramukha. "This race of demons is killed within a minute (*nimiṣa*) and so this forest will be called significantly Naimiṣāraṇya. This will be an abode of Brahmins.

111. In this forest, I will be known as Yajñapuruṣa (Sacrificial Man) and sacrifice is to be offered here always.

112. In Kṛtayuga these fifteen jewel-born leaders will be born as kings."

113. After saying this, the God disappeared. The sage also went to his hermitage in great joy.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Nārāyaṇa Offers a Boon to Supratīka

Varāha said:

1. Hearing that so many men were reduced to ashes in the fire of (Viṣṇu's Sudarśana) disc, king (Supratīka) became most unhappy and he thought of what he might do.

2. Then an idea came into his mind: "Viṣṇu in the form of Śrī Rāma is here on mount Citrakūṭa.

3-4. I will extol Viṣṇu, the Lord of all the world, uttering

His names." Thinking thus, the king went up the sacred mountain Citrakūṭa and recited a hymn.

Supratika said:

5. "Obeisance to the great God Rāma the lord of the people, the imperishable, the ancient, having the form of Śiva (auspicious), the origin of all beings, the destroyer of the enemies of gods, the dispeller of all sorrows of his devotees and the bearer of Lakṣmī (goddess of wealth, on his chest).

6-7. O God, it is you bearing the forms of all beings that always bestow lustre to all lustrous things. In earth you (appear) with five qualities (colour, taste, touch, sound and odour); in water with four (omitting odour); in light with three (omitting taste also); in air with two (omitting colour also); and in ether you are present as the person of sound. You are the moon, sun and fire. It is said that in you this world lies in a latent form.

8-9. As the world rejoices being installed in you, you are well known as Rāma (the delighter). The man who has the raft in the form of meditation on you is not drowned in the ocean of the worldly life which is full of waves of pains and terrible with the fish and crocodiles in the form of senses. Therefore, you are contemplated on as Rāma in hermitages. O Viṣṇu, when the Vedas are lost, you take the form of a fish (and recover them).

10. In the end of Yugas, O all-pervading God, you in the form of Fire, take many shapes and cover all directions. Similarly, on the eve of churning the ocean, O Mādhava, you take the form of a tortoise.

11. There is nothing like you anywhere. All the best things are born from you, Janārdana. O great God, you pervade the whole universe, and all worlds, and all directions are your creations.

12. You are the primordial and ultimate lustre, where else can I seek shelter? First, only you were there (in the vast cosmos). Then, out of you, Mahat (Intellect), Ahaṅkāra, (Ego), water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and three qualities were born. Everything originates from you.

13. All this world is pervaded by you. I take you as the primordial Man. Be victorious, O great God having thousand

hands, having the forms of all the worlds and the Lord of all. I bow to you, O great Rāma."

14. Pleased by this hymn, the great God appeared before king Supratīka and asked him to choose a boon.

15. Then the king hurriedly prostrated before the great God and requested him: "O God of gods, please give me union with yourself."

16. As soon as he said this, the great king attained union with the God. Meditating on the supreme soul, the king got liberation from his bondage of enormous actions and attained identity with the supreme soul.

Varāha said:

17. Thus I have told you a part of what occurred in the age of Svāyambhuva (Manu). No one can tell easily all that occurred then, even if he has thousands of tongues.

18. O auspicious lady, I have told you this ancient story from mere memory. Drops of water from the ocean which fall in many places form valuable later on.

19. What was narrated by Brahmā and Nārāyaṇa cannot be easily narrated by us. It is difficult to picture in the mind his primordial form.

20. In sea there are numerous grains of sand, and in earth numerous particles of dust. Even if they can be counted, it is impossible to count the doings of God.

21. O lovely damsel, I have told you a part of the story of Nārāyaṇa in Kṛtayuga. What else do you want to know ?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Rules for Śrāddha

Earth said:

1. It is wonderful to learn that those soldiers arose from the jewel to help sage Gauramukha. What is the further fruit of the boon ?

2. Who is this great righteous sage Gauramukha ? Seeing the actions of God what did the great sage do ?

Varāha said:

3. Seeing what was done by the God, the sage with a view to worshipping him went to the same forest.

4. There is an important Tīrtha Prabhāsa by name, sacred to Soma, wherein the God (Viṣṇu) who destroyed demons is meditated on by pious men.

5. There the sage worshipped Viṣṇu in the name of Daitya-sūdana (destroyer of demons). The great sage Mārkaṇḍeya came to him who worshipped Lord Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa.

6. Seeing Mārkaṇḍeya coming towards him, sage Gauramukha welcomed him in great joy with venerable offerings and the water for washing his feet.

7. When sage Mārkaṇḍeya sat on the seat of Kuśa grass sage Gauramukha asked him: "Tell me, O great sage, what shall I do ?"

8. Hearing this, the great saintly Brahmin Mārkaṇḍeya told sage Gauramukha in gentle and soft words.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

9. The first preceptor of all gods is Nārāyaṇa. Brahmā was born from him and he (Brahmā) created seven sages.

10. Brahmā asked them (the seven sages) to sacrifice for him, and it is known that each of them sacrificed himself before him (Brahmā).

11. Then Brahmā cursed them, although born from himself, for their rushing to rash actions just out of emotion. Since you committed this serious mistake, all of you will, no doubt, be devoid of knowledge.

12. Thus cursed by Brahmā, those seven sages created sons and then went to heaven.

13. And those sages, the knowers of Brahman, went to heaven; their sons offered them oblations without any delay.

14. All the seven sages, the mind-born sons of Brahmā, appeared in the sky in aerial cars seeing the oblations offered to them with mantras.

Gauramukha asked:

15. O Brahmin, who are those Pitṛs (the manes) ? Which is the time (for those offerings) ? How many groups of manes are there in that world ?

Mārkaṇḍeya replied:

16. There are some good personages who increase the Soma-juice for the gods. Those seven gods, Marīci and others, are called the manes in heaven.

17. Of these, four have form; the remaining three are formless. I shall tell you their worlds and creations.

18. There are worlds by name Santānaka wherein live the luminous manes of the gods. The gods perform sacrifice there for those manes.

19. These who get out of this world, attaining eternal worlds, after a thousand years, again, take birth as knowers of spiritual wisdom.

20. With the memory of the past, they practice yoga, and as a result, attain liberation with little chance of rebirth.

21. These were the manes in obsequial ceremonies who increased the yogic powers of yogins. All of them were full of yogic powers.

22. Therefore, O excellent yogin, obsequial rites have to be offered to yogins. This is the first and great creation of the gods (who drink Soma-juice).

23. These great Brahmins (manes) live in heaven with a single body. They have to be offered sacrifices by the inhabitants of the earth.

24. Marīci and others are sons of Brahmā. They should perform sacrifice for Maruts. The Maruts who are respected by people are to be pleased with sacrifices by those who are called Kalpavāsikas.

25. Then there are Sanaka and others. They were born out of Virāṭ, and they performed penance. There are seven groups of them. This is the line of the manes.

26. These are also to be pleased with sacrifice separately by castes other than Śūdra. With the sanction of the remaining three castes, Śūdra should also sacrifice for the manes.

27. For Śūdras there are separate manes belonging to the same caste. We do not get among the manes, the liberated yet living.

28-29. By the knowledge of special Śāstras and the Purāṇas, of the Ṛṣis, and knowing those that arose from him as worthy to accept sacrificial offerings, Brahmā at creation, recalled his sons,

and they attained liberation due to their spiritual knowledge itself.

30. Kāśyapa and others among Vasu and the like, Vāsava and others among caste-holders and the whole class of Gandharvas and the like (are also the manes).

31. O great sage, I have told you the creation of the manes in a general manner. By even a crore of years this cannot be told in full.

32. Now I shall tell you the time of the Śrāddha rites. O great Brahmin, please listen to this.

33-34. After procuring the required money for the Śrāddha ceremonies and choosing a Brahmin of particular qualities for the purpose, the rites are to be done on the occasions of Vyatīpāta (the day of full-moon when it falls on a Monday), Ayana (the solstices) Viṣuva (the equinoxes) eclipses of the sun and the moon, and of all signs of zodiac (Rāśi) at the time each is entered into by the sun.

35. And at those times also when calamities occur due to stars and planets, when one has an inauspicious dream, and when new vegetation appears, Śrāddhas may be performed, if desired.

36. When Amāvāsyā (the new-moon day) occurs in conjunction with the asterisms Ārdrā, Svāti and Viśākhā the manes get pleased with offerings for eight years.

37. When Amāvāsyā occurs in conjunction with the asterisms Puṣya, Raudra (Ardrā) and Punarvasu, the manes, if worshipped, get pleased for twelve years.

38. Those who wish the manes to be gratified should perform obsequial rites when Amāvāsyā occurs in the asterisms Dhaniṣṭhā, Pūrvā bhādrapadā and Śatabhiṣak. This is a rare occasion even for the gods.

39. Those who wish to have an unending result should perform obsequial rites when Amāvāsyā occurs in the above nine asterisms. Then their merit does not come to an end even after crores of years.

40-41. There are yet other sacred times proper to the Śrāddha ceremonies. They are—the third day of the month Vaiśākha, the ninth day of the bright fortnight in the month Kārttika, the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight in the month Bhādra pada, the fifteenth day of the month Māgha, the eclipses of the sun and the moon and all the four Aṣṭakas (the eighth day of

each quarter of the year) and at the commencement of the two Ayanas or solstices (Uttarāyaṇa and Dakṣiṇāyana).

42. A man, purified by austerities, should offer the manes the water mixed with sesamum. Then, it is deemed that he has done the Śrāddha rites for a thousand years.

43. On rare occasions the Amāvāsyā in the month Māgha joins with the asterism Śatabhiṣak. This is the most happy day of the manes. But, O Brahmin, this is not for a man of inferior worth.

44. O great Brahmin, if this occurs in the asterism Dhaniṣṭhā, then the relatives should give offerings to their manes on that day. That will give them great satisfaction for thousands of years.

45. If oblations are offered to the manes when this occurs in Pūrvā Bhādrapadā, they will be highly gratified and for a full yuga they will get deep sleep.

46. By offering cows and the like on the banks of the Ganges, Śatadru, Vipāśā, Sarasvatī, or Gomatī the dissatisfaction of the manes, if any, can be removed.

47. The manes would wish: When at the end of the dark fortnight of the rainy season the thirteenth day coincides with the asterism Maghā, we may be gratified with sacred waters in the pilgrim centres by our sons and other relatives.

48. Purified heart and wealth, auspicious time enjoined by the rules, the nature of the performance and ardent devotion—these in the performance of Śrāddhas fulfil men's wishes.

49. Listen to the verses sung by the manes on this and then act in accordance with them.

50. "May that kind of man take birth in our family who is intelligent and contented and who without any consideration of monetary benefit offers us oblations with Piṇḍa rice.

51. Who, if he is rich, munificently offers jewels, garments, vehicles, all the wealth, well and pond to Brahmins for our sake;

52. Who if not well-to-do gives meals to Brahmins at the appropriate time in great devotion according to his means;

53. Who, being unable to give meals, gives venerable Brahmins wild Śāka-leaves and a little money;

54. Who, being unable to give even this, offers to a great Brahmin in devotion a handful of dark sesamum;

55. Who offers us a handful of water with seven or eight seeds of sesamum in great devotion;

56. Who gives with devotion to cows a daily measure of food obtained from somewhere, and in the absence of it, pleases them caressing and so on;

57. Who, if he is not in a position of doing any of these, goes to the forest and with palms joined in reverence utters aloud this hymn to the protectors of the quarters like the sun, namely;

58. "I have no money, wealth and the like to offer in the Śrāddha rites; I prostrate before the manes. May they be contented with the respect I offer in devotion."

59. This is sung by the manes, and shows the results of performing Śrāddha and not doing so. The Brahmin who does according to this, does rightly the rites for manes.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Rules for Śrāddha

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1. O Brahmin sage, this was said to me by the intelligent Brahmin, younger brother of Sanaka, son of Brahmā. Listen to me now:

2-4. One who knows all the six Vedāṅgas, who worships the three sacred fires at three sandhyās (morning, noon, and evening) and who offers libations with the three madhus (sugar, honey and ghee), the priest (of the family), nephew, daughter's son, father-in-law, son-in-law, maternal uncle, saintly Brahmin, particularly one who worships the five sacred fires, disciple, matrimonial relative and one who respects his parents—these are fit to be invited in Śrāddha.

5-7. One who troubles his friend, one having bad nails, a brown-toothed Brahmin, an outrager of virgins, one who donates his sacred fire, one who sells Soma-juice, one who is cursed, a thief, a slanderer, a priest who conducts the religious ceremonies for all castes, a hired teacher, a charioteer's teacher, one who has married another's wife, one who does not look after his parents, one who is born of or looked after by a Śūdra woman, the husband of a Śūdra girl, and one who performs worship to

an idol for the sake of others—none of these deserves to be invited for Śrāddha rites.

8. The invitation should be made on the day previous to the Śrāddha. They should be fed first (on the day of the Śrāddha) and afterwards the sannyāsin and others who come uninvited.

9. The feet of the Brahmins who come to the house should be washed, and then with *pavitra* (the ring of Kuśagrass in hand) they should be seated.

10. The performer of Śrāddha should offer oblations to the manes in odd numbers and to the gods in even numbers or to both these each in single.

11. Likewise, he should perform Śrāddha rites for his maternal grandfather with great devotion, along with Vaiśvadeva (an offering to all deities made by presenting oblations to fire before meals) or may perform Vaiśvadevika rites alone.

12. The Brahmin representing (Viśvedevas should be seated to face the east and the Brahmin representing the father and paternal grandfather should be seated to face north.

13. Some sages say that a Brahmin should perform both these (for the gods and the manes) separately whereas others hold that both should be done together.

14. Giving Kuśa-grass as the seat and receiving with *arghya* (oblation consisting of rice, Dūrvā-grass etc.) the performer should invoke the gods with their permission.

15. He should offer oblations to the gods with barley water.

16. After worshipping the manes with incense and sacred lamps according to rules, he should do so to the Pitṛs with *apasavya* (the sacred thread in the left position).

17. Then getting Anujñā (the permission of the priests) offering Kuśa grass divided into two with Mantras he should invoke the manes. Then he should give *arghya* and the like with sesamum and water with *apasavya*.

18. With the permission of Brahmins, one should honour also the Brahmin traveller who comes there for food at that time.

19. Yogins with a view to helping others, roam about everywhere in this earth in various forms without disclosing their identity.

20. Therefore, a discerning man should worship the guest

coming on the occasion of obsequial ceremonies. O great Brahmin, a guest who is not honoured destroys the fruits of the Śrāddha.

21. With the permission of those Brahmins, one should put rice devoid of salt and the like thrice into the fire.

22. The first invocation is—'this is to the fire who bears the oblation of food'. Next—'this is to be conveyed to Soma having the manes.'

23. The third invocation is to Vaivasvata. The remnants of offerings should be put a little in the plates of Brahmins.

24. Then he should give sumptuous food to them and request them in pleasant words to eat well and to their heart's content.

25. He should feed them in all sincerity, and they should eat silently, pleasantly and steadfastly.

26. The Rakṣoghna mantra (meant to drive away the demons) should be recited. Then spreading sesamum as seat on the earth he should say—"these Brahmins are verily the manes to whom we have offered ghee (in fire).

27. May my father, grandfather and great grandfather invoked in this home, feel fully satisfied.

28. May my father, grandfather and great grandfather invoked by these Brahmins feel fully satisfied.

29. May my father, grandfather and great grandfather feel fully satisfied with the Piṇḍas (balls of rice) offered by me on this floor.

30. May my father, grandfather and great grandfather feel fully satisfied with the devotion shown by me.

31. May my maternal grandfather feel satisfied. May all other manes feel satisfied. May Viśvedevas (all gods) attain great satisfaction. May the demons perish.

32. Here is God Viṣṇu, the god of sacrifice, the leader of all sacrifices, the enjoyer, the eternal soul. By his presence, may all demons get away quickly."

33. When these Brahmins are thus made satisfied, some rice should be scattered on the floor, and then each of them should be given in the hand water separately for *ācamana* (sipping).

34-35. With the permission of these who are thus fully fed to satisfaction, he should take all balls of rice from the floor with water and offer them with the sacred water of the manes in a sacred *tīrtha* (pond or river) for the maternal grandfathers.

36. Then he should offer the piṇḍas sanctified by flowers

and incense, on darbha grass placed with tip facing South near the remnants. The first piṇḍa is to be for the departed father.

37. The next one is for the grandfather and the third to the great grandfather. At the root of the darbha, the piṇḍa should be smeared with *añjana* paste.

38. Likewise, for the maternal manes also, one should offer balls of rice along with incense, flower and the like, and give water for *ācamana* to the Brahmins who are fed.

39. He should with devotion utter Svastimantras (words of propitiation) and then give *dakṣiṇā* (money).

40. After giving them this, he should make them recite Vaiśvadevika (mantras of blessings). He should say: "May Viśvedevas (all gods) be pleased".

41. When those Brahmins say "let it be so", he should request them for their benedictions. Then he should send off Viśvedevas first and then the manes.

42. Similarly, in the case of maternal manes also along with Viśvedevas in the matter of feeding, giving money and sending off, from *Pādya* onwards.

43. In the rites for maternal manes the Brahmin having spiritual knowledge should be sent off first and then the others.

44. The performer should accompany them upto the outer door and then, with their permission, return. After the Śrāddha ceremonies he should offer oblations to all deities.

45. Then he should take his food with revered men, servants and relatives.

Thus should the wise perform Śrāddha for the paternal and maternal manes. Propitiated at the Śrāddha, the manes will grant all desires.

46. These three are sacred in Śrāddha, namely grandson, *Kutapa* (the afternoon time suitable for the performance of sacrifices to the manes) and sesamum; so also the *dakṣiṇā* of silver and proper reception and the like.

47. The performer of Śrāddha should avoid three things towards the Brahmin who is to be fed on the occasion—anger, going to the street, and hurry.

48. O Brahmin, all the deities, fathers, maternal grandfather, and the family are purified by the performer of Śrāddha.

49. The manes depend upon the moon and the moon on

yoga. Therefore, O Brahmin, Śrāddha joined with yoga (concentration of mind) is considered superior.

50. A (single) yogin amidst even a thousand Brahmins, liberates all these that are fed in the Śrāddhas as well as the performer.

51. These are the rules of Śrāddha generally described in all Purāṇas. One should free oneself from bondage of worldly life with the knowledge of duties like this.

52. Knowing this from Gauramukha, the sages performing penance got liberation. You also attain the same.

53. I have told you this, O great Brahmin, since you asked me this. What else should be attained by him who meditates on Viṣṇu after performing Śrāddha for the manes." Nothing else is there, no doubt, more than the Śrāddha for the manes.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Sage Gauramukha's Liberation after Uttering the Hymn of Ten Incarnations of Viṣṇu

Earth asked:

1. After hearing the rules for Śrāddha ceremonies from Mārkaṇḍeya, what did sage Gauramukha do?

Varāha replied:

2. After hearing this science pertaining to the manes, Gauramukha was reminded of a hundred births by the intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya.

Earth asked:

3. Who is this Gauramukha? Who was he in the previous births? How did he remember all this? What did he do recollecting this?

Varāha replied:

4. He was Bhṛgu himself in the other birth of Brahmā. This great sage Mārkaṇḍeya was also born in his race.

5. Brahmā told him before: "Taught by your sons you will attain supreme bliss." Therefore, he was taught by Mārkaṇḍeya.

6. He recollected his previous births. I shall tell you briefly, O lovely girl, what he did after remembering all that.

7. He saw his manes after performing Śrāddha for twelve years and then, O Earth, he began to utter a hymn.

8. Near Prabhāsa, the sacred lake famous in the three worlds, Gauramukha stood to extol the God, who destroyed demons.

Gauramukha said:

9. "I extol lord Hari who is Mahendra, Śiva, the dispeller of haughtiness of enemies, Nārāyaṇa, the best among the knowers of the spiritual wisdom, the ancient being who permeates the sun, moon, Aśvins and destroys demons.

10. I extol him, destroyer of the enemies of gods who took the form of the primordial fish when the Vedas were lost— the fish that bore the Earth on its body and whose fin was like fire.

11. May the Lord of gods and the destroyer of demons protect me, who being the primordial Man took the form of tortoise on his own accord and uplifted the mount Mandara in churning ocean.

12. May the destroyer of demons, who is called yajñāṅga (with sacrifice as limbs)) by the multitude of gods and Siddhas and who entered the Talātala (one of the nether worlds) taking the form of a boar, protect me.

13. May the great destroyer of demons the great yogin who took the form of the fierce Man-lion (Nṛsiṁha) with a frightful face and golden hue, protect us.

14. May the short Brahmacārin with staff and deer-skin who changed into a measureless huge body with yogic power, transcended the earth and made the sacrifice of Bali ineffective, purify us.

15. May Hiraṇyagarbha, the destroyer of demons, who as the son of Jamadagni and the protector of Brahmins, conquered the whole world twentyone times and gave it to Kāśyapa, protect me.

16. May the destroyer of demons protect us, whose primordial Hiraṇyagarbha-form attained a fourfold division into Rāma and others (Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna).

17. (May the God protect me) who in each yuga took the wonderful form of Vāsudeva (Śrī Kṛṣṇa—son of Vasudeva) to look after gods who were frightened by the haughty demons like Cāṇūra and Kaṁsa.

18-19. May the great God, the supreme soul, who takes the form of Kalki in every yuga to uphold the caste system whose form cannot be known by the gods, demons and Siddhas without the spiritual knowledge and who is worshipped in his assumed form like the fish, protect us.

20. Obeisance to the exalted Man; obeisance to you again and again. Kindly lead me to the state of liberation. I bow to you."

21. Extolled thus by the sage with great devotion, the God appeared before him holding the disc and mace.

22. Seeing Him, the soul in the form of steady knowledge (Vijñāna) issued out of his body and got merged in the eternal and attained the state called *apunarbhava* (without rebirth).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Story of Saramā

Earth said :

1-4. When Indra, the king of Gods, was cursed by sage Durvāsas to live among mortals, being defeated by the son of Supratīka, what did he and other gods do in the mortal world ? What did Vidyut and Suvidyut with high yogic power do in heaven after the fall of Durjaya ? Be pleased to tell me.

Varāha said :

5. Defeated by Durjaya, O Earth, Indra with all the gods and Yakṣas and Nāgas, first lived in Vārāṇasī in the Bhārata country.

6-7. At that time Vidyut and Suvidyut, O lovely lady, by the power of yoga generated intensive fever in the lords of quarters.

8. Hearing that Durjaya was dead, they brought the submarine fire and rushed to the gods.

9. These two demons went to mount Himavat with the army and stood there.

10. The gods also collected a huge army and discussed about regaining the position of Indra.

11-12. Then the preceptor sage Āṅgirasa told the gods; "First you perform the Gomedha sacrifice and then all other sacrifices. That is the practice. This is my advice. Do follow it."

13. When he said this, the gods left the cattle to graze and entrusted Saramā (the bitch of gods) to look after them.

14. Those cows being looked after by Saramā, the dog of gods, O Earth, went to the place of demons.

15. Seeing those cows, the demons told their priest Śukra: "See, those cows, O Brahmin, grazing, being looked after by Saramā, the bitch of the gods. Tell us what we should do now"

16. When they asked him thus, Śukra said: "Steal these cows quickly; don't delay".

17. Accordingly the demons took away the cows.

18. When the cows were stolen, Saramā searched for them; and found out that they were carried away by demons. The demons realised that Saramā had traced the path of cows.

19. Seeing her they told her in a soft manner: "O auspicious Saramā, please drink the milk of these cows." Then they gave the milk to her.

20-21. Then the leaders of demons told her: "O auspicious, bitch, don't say about these cows of Indra." Then the demons left her in the forest. She, then, went quickly to the gods shivering.

22. Saramā prostrated before Indra, the lord of gods.

23. Indra told the gods Maruts: "O mighty gods, you please go secretly along with this bitch to find out the cattle." Thus they went quickly taking subtle forms.

24. They came back and, O Earth, prostrated before Indra.

25. The king of gods asked: "Saramā, where are the cows?"
Saramā replied: "I don't know".

26. Full of anger, then, Indra asked Maruts: "O Maruts, where are the cows intended for sacrifice? Why does Saramā say so?"

27. Then unperturbed, the Maruts reported to him what Saramā had done.

28. Then the great Indra kicked the bitch in great anger.

29. Saying, "O you fool you have drunk the milk ! The cows are stolen by the demons.", he kicked her again.

30. As a result of that kick by Indra, Saramā vomited the milk she had drunk and ran to the place where the cows were held. Indra followed her accompanied by his army.

31. He saw the cows stolen by demons. But the demons who looked after the cows were very strong.

32. Still they were crushed by Indra's army and so they gave up their bodies along with the cows. Regaining the lost cows the king of gods along with his chieftains became delighted.

33. Thus recovering the cows, Lord Indra with great joy performed a thousand different sacrifices.

34. As he performed these sacrifices, his power also got increased. Then Indra told the army of gods.

35. "O Gods, prepare quickly, to kill demons." Hearing this, gods got themselves ready in a moment.

36. Then they marched with Indra and in the battle they defeated the army of Asuras.

37. O Earth, the few demons that survived the battle, plunged into the sea struck with fear and completely perplexed.

38. And the great lord Indra followed by gods and protectors of the quarters reigned in heaven as before.

39. The man who hears daily this excellent story of Saramā attains the fruit of Gomedha sacrifice.

40. If a king who lost his kingdom listens to this story intently, he will be able to recover his kingdom like Indra the heaven.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Story of Mahātapas

Earth said :

1. Those great men who were born of the gem were given a boon indeed by the God in Tretāyuga.

2. How was the birth of those kings to be ? What were their deeds ? Tell me this for each.

Varāha said:

3. O Earth, listen to the origin of the great king Suprabha who rose from the gem.

4. In Kṛtayuga there lived a powerful and noble king named Śrutakīrti.

5. Suprabha was born as his son, and was named Prajāpāla.

6. One day he went to the forest infested with wild beasts, and saw there the great hermitage of a sage.

7. In it an exceedingly virtuous sage by name Mahātapas was performing penance giving up food and meditating on the Supreme Soul.

8. King Prajāpāla felt desirous of entering the hermitage, and he quickly went into it.

9. In the grand hermitage, there were pleasant bowers beautiful like the moon with attractive creepers surrounded by hovering bees. The very pathway was fine with big trees on the sides.

10.* The ponds with full-blown red lotuses looked like celestial women with rosy feet, who had left Indraloka and come there.

11. In the protruding branches of trees which looked very symmetrical, were blossoms of flowers with honeyfed blackbees and a variety of birds reposing as if fully satiated.

12. There were many kinds of trees like Kadamba, Nīpa Arjuna and Sāla, nourished by the householders and served by sweet-voiced birds.

13. The hermitage was surrounded by Brahmins with families and by sacred smokes coming up from the sacrificial fire. The elephant of vice there was killed by the lions of virtue.

14. Seeing there different objects like these, the king entered the hermitage. In it he saw the great sage Mahātapas, the champion of duty and seeker of Brahman, sitting on a seat of kuśa-grass, and resplendent like the sun.

15. Seeing the sage, the king forgot his hunt. The sight of the sage diverted his good mind to righteous action.

1. The stanza is very corrupt.

16. The sage received Prajāpāla with words of welcome and offered him a seat.

17. Then the king prostrated before the great sage and sat on his seat. O Earth, then he asked him:

18. "Tell me, O Great sage, what should be done by those plunged into woes of worldly life, but wish to overcome it."

Mahātapas said:

19. Those men who are plunged into the ocean of worldly life have to obtain a firm raft to cross it. They have to make the lord of all the three worlds this raft with proper worship, homas, gifts and prescribed sacrifices and meditations and fixed to the liberated souls by the strong strings of their vital airs.

20. One who bows to Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of hell and the Lord of gods in devotion, attains the imperishable abode of Viṣṇu, free from all sorrows.

Prajāpāla asked:

21. O sage, the knower of all that is righteous, tell me precisely how the eternal Viṣṇu is worshipped by those men who wish to get final emancipation.

Mahātapas replied :

22. Hear from me, O intelligent king, how Viṣṇu, the lord of all the yogins, is pleased at men and women.

23. The Vedas say that Brahmā and all other gods and the manes all of whom were in the cosmic egg were born from Viṣṇu.

24-25. Agni, Aśvins, Gaurī, Gaṇapati, Nāgas, Kārttikeya, Ādityas, Mātṛs, Durgā, Diks, Kubera, Viṣṇu, Yama, Rudra, Candra, Pitṛs—all these were born of the lord of the worlds, according to their importance.

26. All these beings were in Hiraṇyagarbha's body. But each became highly egoistic.

27. Their loud claims, 'I am competent', 'I have to be propitiated by sacrifices', were heard in the assembly of the gods like the roar of agitated ocean.

28-29. Among them, O king, Agni (fire)stood up and said: "Sacrifice for me; meditate on me. This body created by Brahmā will perish without me. Hence I am great".

30. So saying Fire left the body; but even when he disappeared, the body did not perish.

31. Then Aśvins, the personified forms of Prāṇa and Apāna airs said: "We are important and so we have to be pleased with sacrifices".

32. Saying this they stood apart leaving the body. The body was a bit emaciated, but it did not perish.

33. Then Gaurī, the speech, said : "Importance is in me". So saying she also left the body.

34. Even without her, the body remained, though without speech. Then Gaṇapati, the space, said:

35-36. "Without me no body stands for long in course of time." So saying he also left the body. Without him too, the body did not perish.

37. Finding the body devoid of holes, all the *dhātus* of the body said thus:

38. "In our absence the body cannot bear itself"—saying this, all of them left the body.

39. Even without them the body was looked after by Puruṣa (the Supreme Soul). Seeing that, Skanda who is the embodiment of Ahaṁkāra (ego) said:

40. "Without me the body cannot exist". So saying he left the body and stood away.

41. Without him too, the body stood intact and as if emancipated. Seeing this, Sun, the Āditya, got angry.

42. "How can this body stand without me even for a moment ?" Uttering thus, he left the body. Even then the body was not destroyed.

43. Then the group of passion and the like called as Mothers said: "The body cannot bear itself if we leave this." They left the body. Then also the body was unaffected.

44. Then Durgā well known as Māyā (illusion) said angrily: "without me there is no life (Bhūti)". Saying this Durgā disappeared from the body. Even then the body was not destroyed.

45. Then the quarters stood up and said, "No doubt, without us, nothing could be done".

46-47. Within a moment they went away. Then Kubera, the air occurring in the middle of the body, also left the body and went upwards.

48. Then Viṣṇu, the mind, said: "Without me this body cannot stand even for a moment. Saying this, he also disappeared.

49. After this Yama said: "I protect all this. When I leave this body nothing should be there."

Saying this, Yama went away. Even then the body was not affected.

50. Then said Mahādeva, the subtle cause of beings: "I am great and without me the body will not be there."

51. Saying this Śiva (Mahat) left the body. Then also it was not destroyed.

52. Seeing this the Pitṛs (sense organs) said: "As long as we along with other life-airs live in this, this body stands; otherwise it will be destroyed." So saying they left the body and disappeared.

53-54. Saying this, Agni, Prāṇa, Apāna, Ākāśa Dhātus, Ahaṁkāra, sun, desire, Māyā quarters, Vāyu, Viṣṇu, Dharma, Śambhu and the sense-organs left the body.

55. Still the body stood as if liberated, being protected by Puruṣa in the form of Soma, the moon.

56. When the imperishable Soma consisting of sixteen digits stood thus, the body with its qualities stood up and began its work as before.

57. Seeing the body protected by Sarvajña (Puruṣa) as before, all those deities of the body got ashamed and extolled that great god.

58. O king, all those entered into the body and took their own positions and extolled Him: "You are the Fire, you are Prāṇa, Apāna and Sarasvatī (word).

59. You are Ākāśa, Kubera and Dhātus of the body. You are Ahaṁkāra; you are the Sun, and the Mātṛgaṇa.

60. You are the Māyā and the earth, you are Durgā, quarters and Indra; you are Viṣṇu and Dharma. You are the victor and the vanquished.

61. You are called Parameśvara (Supreme lord) in its liberal sense. Otherwise how could this happen (the body remaining unaffected) when we left it.

62. When we gave up the body, O God, there was none else but you. So please protect us.

63. O Creator, having created yourself in our forms, don't change positions."

Thus extolled by them, the God was pleased very much.

64. He told them: "I have created you for my sport. I have only one purpose to be gained by you.

65. If you don't like your form, then you divide it into two and stand formless in the beings on earth and with form in the world of gods. In due course attain dissolution (in the Supreme soul) yourselves.

66. Do not be egoistic any more with regard to yourselves in the body. I shall assign you your names now.

67. Agni will be Vaiśvānara; Prāṇa and Apāna. Aśvins; Gaurī-Himavat's daughter.

68. The qualities like those of the earth will be Gaṇapati. These various other beings are the dhātus (the essential elements) of the body.

69. Skanda Kārttikeya will be the ego. At the end Durgā will be the last of the causes for the body and will be Māyā (the power of illusion).

70. These ten virgins will be ten quarters. Kubera will be the air.

71. This mind will be called Viṣṇu, no doubt; so also Dharma (righteousness) will be Yama.

72. The 'great principle' (Mahattattva) will be Mahādeva. The sense organs will be the manes, no doubt.

73. This moon will be always in the Jāmitra, no doubt.[1]

Thus I have described the Vedānta-puruṣa (Vedāntic Man) in the form of Nārāyaṇa." All the gods sat on their respective seats. And the God thus finished the account.

74. I have told you, O king, about God Viṣṇu who is of such prowess and who can be known only through the Vedas. What else do you want to know?

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1. Jāmitra is the seventh house in horoscopy. This is taken as the house concerned with matrimony. The passage indicates that moon will govern marital relations.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

(*The Origin of Fire*)

Prajāpāla said:

1-3. O great sage, how did Agni, Aśvins, Gaurī, Gaṇapati, Nāgas, Skanda, Āditya, Candra, Mātṛs, Durgā, Diks, Kubera, Viṣṇu, Dharma, Śiva, Pitṛs and Candra take birth ? How did all these deities of the body attain concrete forms ?

4. Also tell me, O sage, for each of these the food, name, and the sacred day of the month, on which each gives to the people the result of their worship. I wish to know all this secret.

Mahātapas said:

5. When the omniscient soul in the form of Nārāyaṇa played himself with the form attained by the yogic power, he willed in himself the desire to enjoy.

6. Then the great cosmos (Mahābhūta) was stirred, the wonderful basis of all existence (water) arose.

7. Pleased at this, he willed its transformation, and during this transformation, there arose the great fire.

8. This fire was burning with countless flames and with noise. The effulgent fire underwent transformation and then arose from it the terrific wind.

9. By the transformation of air, Ether (space) came into existence with sound as its distinctive quality.

10. The space, air, heat and water interacted among themselves.

11. The water was dried by the heat and wafted by the wind, and the sky was made distinct.

12. The whole mass thus solidified and hardened. Thus came into being this earth and later the trees and the rest in it.

13. By the harmonious combination of these four (water, fire, air and space) as well as by the preponderance of each, the earth attained five qualities established in it. Getting hard thus, it became the Brahmāṇḍa (the universe).

14. In it, God Nārāyaṇa having four hands and a fourfold form wished to create different beings taking the form of the creator.

15. Thinking about it as he did, he could not properly conceive it. Then he became extremely angry.

16. From that anger arose fire with a thousand flames and it came to burn the Creator himself. It was then told by him as follows.

17-18. "You bear (*vaha*) the offerings *havya* (for the gods) and *kavya* (for the manes)". Thus Fire became *Havyavāhana*. But fire was itself hungry and asked Brahmā (the creator): what it might do. Brahmā replied. "You will be gratified in three ways.[1]

19. Propitiated by dakṣiṇās (offerings of money) first, you carry the dakṣiṇās to the gods. So you be *Dakṣiṇāgni*.

20. You take what is offered to the gods in sacrifices all over the three worlds. So, O fire, you are *Havyavāhana*.

21. The body is said to be Gṛha (a home). Since you are its Lord, you be *Gārhapatya* everywhere.

22. When propitiated by offerings you lead all men to final liberation. Therefore you be *Vaiśvānara*.

23. *Draviṇa* (money) is power and it is wealth. Since you give this, you are *Draviṇodāḥ* (giver of money).

24. Sins disappear always. The word *nis* stands for certainty. Therefore and also since you are everywhere, O Agni, you will get (the name) *Tejas* (splendour).[2]

25. Since you blaze when *Idhma* (the bundle of sacred sticks) is placed in you and air blows, you are yourself *Idhma*.

26. O my son, surely people who sacrifice will propitiate you with offerings in these names in great sacrifices."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Greatness of Fire

Mahātapas said:

1. I have told you incidentally the greatness of Viṣṇu's

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1. This refers to the three sacred fires—Gārhapatya, Dākṣiṇātya and Āhavanīya.

2. This verse is highly corrupt and does not yield any cogent sense. Some matter seems to be missing between the two lines.

manifestations. Now I shall tell you about the importance of *tithis* (dates). Listen to me.

2. The great fire born from Brahmā's anger asked Brahmā: "O lord, please give me a day in which I shall get the praise of the whole world".

Brahmā said:

3. O fire, the foremost among the gods, Yakṣas and Gandharvas, you were born on *Pratipad*, the first day (in the fortnight).

4. On account of this that day will be honoured by all gods. Thus the day *Pratipad* is yours.

5. On that day the gods and manes will be gratified by the offerings given in *Prājāpatya* form.

6. Four kinds of beings, men, beasts, demons and gods, together with Gandharvas, will be pleased if you are gratified.

7. Your devotee who on the Pratipad day, fully fasts or takes milk alone, gets the great result of beng worshipped in heaven for twentysix aeons.

8. And he will be the powerful, beautiful and wealthy in this life and after his death he will be respected in heaven as a king.

9. The fire went to the hermitage given by Brahmā and kept quiet.

10. The man who hears this story of the birth of fire getting up early morning, no doubt, will be free from all sins.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Origin of Aśvins

Prajāpāla said:

1. The fire was thus born from the great Brahmā. How did Prāṇa and Apāna in the form of twin gods Aśvins take birth ?

Mahātapas said:

2. Marīci was Brahmā's son, the foremost among the fourteen forms assumed by him.

3. His son was the great sage by name Kaśyapa. Being himself a creator, he became the father of gods.

4. He got as his sons twelve suns, (ādityas) all endowed with the spirit of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

5. These suns (ādityas) are the twelve months while Viṣṇu himself is the year. Mārtaṇḍa is the most lustrous among those twelve suns (ādityas).

6. Tvaṣṭā gave him his gracious daughter named Saṃjñā in marriage. He got two children by her, Yama and Yamunā.

7. But unable to bear his virility she became a steed fast as the mind and leaving her shadow (Chāyā) there, went to the Northern Kurus.

8. The Sun had union with Chāyā who was in form and complexion similar to her and got two chidren—Śani (Saturn) and Tapatī.

9. Chāyā did not treat all these children equally and so Mārtaṇḍa became angry and told her: "O dear, don't show partiality among your children."

10. Yet, she did not change her attitude. Then Yama said to his father with great sorrow:

11. "O my father, she is not my mother. She always behaves towards us as an enemy. In a stepmotherly manner, she behaves cruelly towards us, but kindly towards her own children."

12. Hearing Yama's words, Chāyā lost her temper and cursed him: "You will shortly be the king of the dead".

13. Hearing this, Mārtaṇḍa consoled him saying: "You will be the judge in deciding merit and demerit. And you will have the position in heaven as a guardian deity".[1]

14. Then, agitated by Chāyā's anger, he cursed Śani (Saturn). "O my son, you will be of cruel eye on account of your mother's fault".

15. Then, the Sun rose up and went to Northern Kurus to see Saṃjñā and saw her there in the form of a mare.

16. Then he too took the form of a steed and united himself with her.

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1. Yama is the *dikpāla* guarding the southern direction.

17. In that daughter of Tvaṣṭā in the form a mare, he, in the form of the horse, laid the glowing seed, but that came out split into two.

18. These in the uterus were Prāṇa and Apāna but attained embodied forms due to boon.

19. Since they were born from Tvaṣṭā's daughter who was in the form of a mare (*Aśva*), these sons of the Sun by her are praised as the Aśvins.

20. The Sun himself was the Creator, the daughter of Tvaṣṭā the power (Śakti) by name *parāpara*. These two were in her body first formless and then they attained their form.

21. Then the gods Aśvins approached the Sun and asked him: "What shall we do ?"

The Sun said:

22. "O my sons, worship the Creator Nārāyaṇa with devotion and get from Him a boon".

23. Advised by the great Sun thus they, performed severe penance reciting the Brahmapāra hymn.

24. After so many years, Brahmā, the manifestation of Nārāyaṇa, was pleased by their penance and he gave them a boon with extreme joy.

Prajāpāla said:

25. O great sage, I wish to know the hymn recited by the Aśvins on Brahmā.

Mahātapas said:

26. Hear from me, O sinless king, the hymn to Brahmā recited by the Aśvins and the fruit that they obtained by the recitation of that hymn.

27. "I bow to you, the being free from action, free from the world, one without any base or dependence, devoid of qualities and beyond vision, and one free from the feeling 'I' and 'mine'.

28. O Brahman, great Brahman, dear to Brahmins, O man, Supreme Man, excellent Man; O god, great god, excellent god; O immovable, one who preserves harmony.

29. O being, great being, lord of beings; O Yakṣa, great Yakṣa, lord of Yakṣas; O Guhya, great Guhya and Lord of

Guhyas: O soft, very soft, and lord of all that is soft.

30. O bird, lord of great birds, O demon, lord of great demons; O Rudra, lord of great Rudras; O Viṣṇu, lord of great Viṣṇu; O Supreme lord Nārāyaṇa; I bow to you, O Prajāpati (creator)."

31. Extolled by those twin gods, the Aśvins, the Creator was pleased very much and said thus:

32. "Please woo a boon which is rare even to the gods and by which you can go everywhere in heaven."

Aśvins said:

33. "O great Creator, please give us our share among gods. Please give us the position of gods who drink Soma-juice and an eternal place in the generality of gods."

Brahmā said:

34. You will attain all these—beauty, lustre, uniqueness, the position of physicians for all beings, and a place among gods entitled to drink Soma-juice in the worlds.

Mahātapas said:

35. All this was given by Brahmā to Aśvins on the second day. Therefore, the second (*Dvitīyā*) is the best day among all days.

36. The man who wishes to attain beauty should eat flowers only on this day. And if he does this for a year in all purity, he will attain great beauty of form.

37. One who hears this account of the origin of Aśvins daily, attains all those qualities of Aśvins and will be freed from all sins and blessed with sons.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

The Origin of Gaurī

Prajāpāla said:

1. O wise sage, how was Gaurī extolled on account of the boon, and how did she become part of the body of the great god (Rudra) ?

Mahātapas said:

2. Formerly, the virtuous god Brahmā, in order to create different beings, entered into deep thought, but could not gain the end.

3. He then became angry, and from the anger arose the valiant Rudra (lit. 'roarer'), so-called because he was crying loudly at birth.

4. To him Brahmā gave as wife the auspicious virgin his daughter, the goddess of speech, named Gaurī.

5-7. He was extremely happy at getting this beautiful damsel, but when Brahmā persuaded him repeatedly to create, he found himself incapable of it and entered into water (to perform penance) feeling that what could be done through penance alone could not be accomplished without it.

8-9. When he thus remained within water, Brahmā lodged the beautiful Gaurī within his own body, and then, desirous of creation, produced seven beings[1] from his mind and also Dakṣa, and progeny was thus increased.

10. The children of Dākṣāyaṇī (lit. Dakṣa's daughter[2]) are the gods and (their king) Indra, eight Vasus, Rudras,[3] Ādityas and Maruts.

11-12. The beautiful Gaurī, formerly married by the great Rudra was then given by Brahmā as daughter to Dakṣa. She thus became Dākṣāyaṇī.

13. Dakṣa was pleased with his daughter's children and in

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1. These are the seven sages Marici, Atri and others.
2. Presumably identical with Aditi.
3. This group of gods should be taken as different from the Rudra created by Brahmā earlier.

order to make them prosperous, he started a sacrifice to propitiate Brahmā.

14. *In that the functions of the priests were taken upon* themselves by the sons of Brahmā, namely Marīci and others, in a specific manner.

15-17. Marīci became Brahman (priest), Atri the supervisor, Aṅgiras the Āgnīdhra (priest to kindle fire), Pulastya the Hotā (to recite Ṛgvedic hymns), Pulaha the Udgātā (to recite Sāman hymns), Kratu the Prastotā (to assist the Udgātā), Pracetas the Pratihartā (also to assist the Udgātā) and Vāsiṣṭha the Subrahmaṇya (priest). The Sabhā (assembly) was constituted of Sanaka and others.

18. The person to be propitiated by the sacrifice was Brahmā himself and the sacrifice was for the world. The persons to be honoured were the sons of Dakṣa's daughter, Rudras, Ādityas, Aṅgiras and others because they are the visible Pitṛs, and once they are pleased, the whole world is pleased.

19-20. The sacrificial offerings were meant for the Devas, Ādityas, Vasus, Viśvedevas, Pitṛs, Gandharvas and Maruts, and they received fully all that was offered in the sacrificial fire.

21. At that time, suddenly arose Rudra, the anger-born son of Brahmā, from the water into which he had formerly entered.

22. He came out of the water completely pure, full of knowledge and resplendant like a thousand suns.

23. He shone with his penance which enabled him to visualise the whole universe. Then took place the creation of five things, the celestrials and the four kinds of mortals.

24. The creation by Rudra occurred quickly. O great king, now listen to the account of that creation.

25-26. When Rudra came out after performing penance in the water for ten thousand years, he saw the earth full of fine vegetation and big forests and peopled by human beings and beasts.

27. He then heard the recitations of the priests in Dakṣa's house and the words of praise in the hermitage.

28. At that the omniscient and resplendent god (Rudra) became extremely angry and said:

29. "Formerly I was created by Brahmā to be fully potent

to create beings and I was asked to start the process. Who has done that action now".

30-31. So saying he roared aloud in high rage and from his ears issued forth huge flames and from them came out with weapons ghosts and goblins in crores.

32. After creating such an army equipped with numerous weapons he produced a chariot of Veda and Vidyā (knowledge).

33-34. In it two deer were the drawing horses, the triple principle[1] was the central pole, the three sandhyās (morning, noon and evening) the three shafts (wheels), dharma the axle, air the sound, day and night the two flags, merit and demerit the flagstaffs all the Vidyās together with Kalās the seat and Brahmā the charioteer.

35. Gāyatrī was the bow, the syllable Om the bowstring, the seven notes of music the arrows for that great god.

36. With all this array and equipment the valiant god flew to Dakṣa's sacrifice.

37. As Rudra was descending from the sky, there was a loud noise at which the mantras of the priests were lost.

38. Seeing this portent the priests said in fear; "A great danger has befallen us; let the gods get ready for battle".

39. A big demon created by Brahmā is coming here to partake of the special offering in this sacrifice".

40. Then the gods addressed their maternal grand-father Dakṣa: "O Sire, please tell us what you think we should do".

Dakṣa said:

41. "Take up your weapons immediately and wage a war".

42. Told thus, A big battle was then fought by the gods with the army of Rudra, carrying various weapons.

43. The vampires, goblins and imps holding different weapons fought with the guardian deities.

44. The Bhūtagaṇas came out of heaven and entering Yama's abode showered arrows, fierce swords and axes.

45. They attacked Devas with firebrands and bows and arrows in fury before Rudra.

46. Then in that fierce battle Rudra pierced with an arrow

1. Signifies God, Soul and matter.

both the eyes of Bhaga.

47. Seeing Bhaga thus made eyeless, Pūṣā got angry and engaged Rudra in fight.

48. Seeing Pūṣā aiming an array of arrows, Rudra caught him and pulled out his teeth.

49. At the sight of these fallen teeth the army of gods took to their heels.

50. Seeing the army scattering away Viṣṇu, the younger brother of Āditya, addressed it.

51. "Where do you run away giving up your valour, pride and position. Why don't you remember your calling, family and responsibility?

52. Since you get your life from Brahmā, you prostrate before that great god."

53. Saying thus, Viṣṇu wearing yellow garment and bearing conch, disc and mace, seated himself on Garuḍa.

54. Then occurred the thrilling battle between Viṣṇu and Rudra.

55. Rudra hit Hari with the Pāśupata weapon. Infuriated at this Hari hit Rudra with the Nārāyaṇa weapon.

56. These two weapons fought each other in the sky intensively, each to gain victory over the other. The fight continued for a thousand divine years.

57. One was having a crown on his head, and the other tresses of matted hair. One blew the conch, the other sounded the drum.

58. One was holding a sword and the other a staff. One was glowing with the Kaustubha gem, the other was shining with ashes all over the body.

59. One was whirling the mace, the other the pole. One shone with gems round the neck and the other with a string of skulls.

60. One was wearing the yellow garment, the other a girdle of serpents. Thus were the two opposing weapons, one Viṣṇu's and the other Śiva's in essence.

61. Seeing them combating each other, Brahmā appealed to them to calm down.

62. They did so and Brahmā told Viṣṇu and Rudra.

63. "Both Viṣṇu and Rudra will attain prominence in the world. This sacrifice which was smashed, also will be completed.

64. Dakṣa will attain fame in the world because of the progeny".

65. Telling thus to Viṣṇu and Rudra, Brahmā, the grandfather of the world, asked the people to give Rudra a share in the sacrifice.

66. (He said): "The portion to Rudra is declared to be the foremost in the Vedas. So you Devas, praise this great god Rudra the destroyer of the eye of Bhaga and the teeth of Pūṣā.

67. Quickly sing his praise with all his names, and he will be pleased to grant you boons.

68. Thus asked, Devas bowed to Śambhu and sang his praise in great reverence.

The gods said:

69-70. "Bow to the uneven-eyed, bow to the three-eyed, bow to the hundred-eyed, bow to the bearer of trident, bow to the bearer of Khaṭvāṅga,[1] bow to the holder of staff.

71. You are resplendent like the shooting flame as well as like a crore of suns. We were foolish before seeing you, we are enlightened now at your sight.

72. Bow to the three-eyed Śambhu, the remover of all distress, holder of the trident, with mouth fierce, lord of all gods, the essence of purity, immanent, omnipresent, O Rudra, be pleased.

73. O lord of the worlds pervading the universe, O fierce destroyer of the teeth of Pūṣā, with neck full of hanging serpents with expansive body and bluish neck, be pleased.

74. O great lord endowed with all virtues, the crusher of Bhaga's eye, be pleased to receive the main share of the sacrificial offering and save us all.

75. O lord that arose from Brahmā, O lord of Umā, O destroyer of Tripura, O holder of the bowl, with ash smeared in body, save us from all fear.

76. We find in your person, O Lord of gods, the entire

1. A mace with a skull at the head.

creation, the Vedas with their Pada, Krama etc.,[1] and the Vedāṅgas and all branches of knowledge.

77. "O Bhava, O Śarva, O Mahādeva, O Pinākin, O Rudra, O Hara, we all bow to you, protect us all".

78. Praised by the gods in this way, Maheśvara was much pleased, and he spoke thus to them all:

Rudra said:

79. "Let Bhaga get back his eye and Pūṣā his teeth. Let the sacrifice of Dakṣa also attain completion.

80. At my sight, O Devas, you have all become animals to me and I take you all to me. I thus become your master.

81-82. I am also the prime master of all knowledge. Being thus the master of all you animals, I will attain the name Paśupati (lord of all beasts) in the world.

83. Those who sacrifice for me will have the observance called 'Paśupati' ".

84. When Rudra spoke thus, Brahmā told him affectionately with a smile:

"Certainly you will be hailed as 'Paśupati' in the world, and the world will gain renown by your name.

85. The entire world will surely worship you.

86. The clever Brahmā then spoke to Dakṣa: "As already decided, give Gaurī in marriage to Rudra".

87. Saying so he gave the highly auspicious Gaurī to Rudra in the presence of Dakṣa, thus showing him a great favour.

88. When Dakṣa's daughter was thus married, Brahmā gave to Rudra an abode on mount Kailāsa before all gods.

89. Rudra with his attendant Bhūtas then went to Kailāsa.

90. Devas in great joy returned to their places and Brahmā with Dakṣa went to his abode.

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1. Pada, Krama, Jaṭā, Ratha and Ghana are methods of rendering the Veda, each word being differently combined with the preceding and following words.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Marriage of Gauri

Mahātapas said:

1. While they were thus living there, Gaurī got angry towards Rudra, thinking of the enmity between him and her father.

2. She thought of the place[1] taken away by him and his smashing the sacrifice and decided to give up her body.

3. She thought: "Being born in his house,[2] I shall attain the lord by penance. How can I go to my father Dakṣa who has nothing with him now ?

4. Thinking thus, the beautiful wife of Rudra, went for penance in the great mountain Himālaya.

5. Then she allowed her body to gradually emaciate and finally burnt it by the fire from within, and then she became the daughter of Himavān by name Umā, also called Kṛṣṇā.

6. Thus born with a beautiful and auspicious body in the house of Himavān, she again performed penance meditating on the three-eyed Rudra.

7. She remained in penance for a long time with the resolve: "This (Rudra) is my husband".

8. When she was thus performing severe penance in the great mountain Himavān, god Maheśvara felt propitiated and appeared in her hermitage in the form of a Brahmin.

9. The Brahmin was very old with crippled limbs and was faltering at every step. He came near her with difficulty and told her: "O gracious lady, I am extremely hungry, please give me some food".

10. Asked thus, Umā, the daughter of the mountain told him: "O Brahmin, I shall give you fruits to eat. Please take your bath and then eat well".

11. At this, the Brahmin got down for bath in the river Gaṅgā which was flowing close by.

12. While bathing there, he created in it an illusory shark, big and fierce, and that caught him.

13. He then told Umā showing her the shark that had caught him.

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1. Kailāsa.
2. In the house of Himavān.

14. "O girl, a great mishap has happened. Save me from this shark before I am mutilated by it".

15. Hearing this Pārvatī thought: "I touch Himavān as my father and Śiva as my husband. In this state of mind, purified by penance, how can I touch this Brahmin ?

16. If I don't hold him by the hand and drag him out of the water, no doubt the sin of being responsible for the death of a Brahmin will befall me.

17. Any other transgression of righteousness can be atoned for, but never being the cause of a Brahmin's death". So saying she hastened towards him.

18. Going there quickly she held the Brahmin by the hand and dragged him out of the water. He then assumed his real form.

19. The same lord Rudra to please whom Pārvatī was performing penance was now holding her hand.

20. Seeing him she was bashful, and remembering her act of giving up her body, did not speak.

21. Seeing Gaurī silent, Rudra said with a smile: "Having held me by the hand, how can you give me up ?

22. If you are going to make this vain for wedlock, then I ask you, the daughter of Brahmā, to give me food (for which I came).

23. O lady, I am not joking; I have told you what I should". She then said with a smile:

24. "O great lord of the three worlds, all my endeavour has been to attain you. I worshipped you as my husband in my previous life.

25. Now too you are my husband, and none else can be so. But my master is now my father, the lord of mountains. I shall go to him.

26. Duly getting his consent. you will marry me".

27. So saying, she went to her father Himavān and with palms joined in reverence she told him thus.

28. "Rudra, the smasher of Dakṣa's sacrifice, who was my husband in my former life, has now become, as a result of my penance, full of love for me.

29. He came to me in my hermitage in the guise of an old Brahmin and asked me food.

30. I asked him to have his bath (before the meal), and accordingly he descended into the Ganges for the purpose. He was then caught by a shark and he cried for help.

31. Being afraid of incurring the sin of killing a Brahmin (if I did not help him), I pulled him out by the hand, and then he showed me his real form.

32. He then told me that our hands have been mutually held together (and thus the marriage has been effected), and that I should not have any hesitation.

33. Being thus told by the great Śaṅkara, I have now come to tell you.

34. Whatever is proper now, you may kindly do quickly".

35. Hearing these words, the king of mountains was much pleased, and he told his daughter:

36. "O daughter, I am indeed blessed in this world in that Rudra has by himself chosen to become my son-in-law. I have become the father of a worthy daughter.

37. I have now been placed at the head of Devas by you, my daughter. Please wait for a while till I return".

38. So saying, the king of the mountains went to Brahmā, the grandfather of all Devas.

39. Bowing to him in reverence, he said that he proposed to give his daughter Umā in marriage to Rudra.

40. Brahmā, the grandfather of Devas and progenitor of the world, gave his consent.

41. Then the king of mountains rushed back to his home. He then invited Tumburu, Nārada, Hāhā, Hūhū, Kinnaras, Asuras and Rākṣasas.

42. The mountains, rivers, hills, trees and plants all came in their personal forms to see Himavān's daughter and her marriage with Śaṅkara.

43. The earth became the altar for the marriage, the seven seas the ritual pots, the sun and the moon the lamps, and the rivers the carriers of water.

44. Making thus the materials for the marriage, the king of mountains sent mount Mandara to Rudra.

45. Called by Mandara, Śaṅkara came quickly and he took the hand of Umā in marriage according to the rites.

46. In that ceremony Parvata and Nārada sang, the Sid-

dhas danced, the trees showered flowers and celestial damsels danced in joy.

47. In that marriage wherein holy water was flowing, Brahmā, in consideration of the world, told Umā, "O daughter, you will be a model for other women in the world", and told Rudra "*you will be a model for other men*".

48. So saying to Umā and Rudra, Brahmā went to his abode.

49. Thus said sage Mahātapas to Prajāpāla who asked him. (He continued).

50. "The origin of Gaurī as well as the account of her marriage has been thus said to you."

51. All this happened on Tṛtīyā tithi. Therefore on Tṛtīyā tithi day give up salt in your food.

52. A man or a woman who fasts on that day gets prosperity.

53-54. A man or woman in utter misery, if he or she gives up salt and listens to this, attains all desires, acquires great wealth and gains health, brilliance and opulence.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Origin of Vināyaka

Prajāpāla said:

1. O good sage, I am eager to know how Gaṇapati was born. Be pleased to tell me.

Mahātapas said:

2. Formerly, the hosts of Devas and all the sages and saints began to do things to gain the result.

3. It was seen that the actions of the righteous faced numerous impediments to success while the actions of the unrighteous were unimpeded.

4. Then the gods and manes seriously deliberated on the matter and thought of ways for creating obstacles in the actions of the bad.

5. It occurred to Devas then that they may very well consult

the highly intelligent Rudra.

6. They, therefore, went to him in Kailāsa and, bowing to him, said in great respect.

The gods said:

7. "O great god with three eyes and trident in hand, it behoves you to create (a being) for obstructing the actions of the bad".

8. Thus requested by Devas, Rudra with great pleasure looked at Umā for a moment.

9. When he was looking at Umā in the presence of gods, he was worried why no form of his was seen in the sky.

10. "There is the body in earth, there is one in water; so also in fire and air.

11-15. How is it not there in sky ?" So thinking he laughed. By the power of knowledge, by what was seen by Rudra in the sky, by what was said by Brahmā formerly as the body of all beings, by the laughter of Rudra, by all these four in the four elements Earth and the rest, there arose a boy effulgent with glowing face, looking like Rudra himself and stupefying Devas with the charm of his dazzling brilliance.

16. Seeing the person of this great boy, Umā remained with eyes stuck on him.

17. Looking at the beautiful form of the boy and thinking of the fickleness of women's minds Rudra got angry and cursed him.

18. "O boy, you will attain an elephant's face, protruding belly and yajñopavīta of serpents".

19. He cursed him thus in great anger, and then rose up shaking his body.

20. With each shake of the body, water fell on the earth and from it arose numerous Vināyakas, elephant-faced and dark-coloured, holding various weapons.

21-22. The Lord (Rudra) then got annoyed and wondered when even one of them could do extraordinary things, how much more will the multitude do ?

23. When Devas were thus thinking, the earth became agitated by Vināyakas. Brahmā then rose up in the sky in his vehicle and said:

24. "O gods, you are lucky. You have been blessed by the wonderful Parameśvara (Rudra). The actions of demons will be surely hampered".

25. After telling them thus, he turned to the holder of fire in the palm (Rudra): "O Lord, let him who was born out of your mouth (i.e., laughter), Gaṇapati, be the chief of these Vināyakas, and let the rest be his followers.

26. Occupying the sky as well, let him be in the other four elements with you. And let the sky with all its parts be for him.

27. You be the master to give him great weapons."

When Brahmā departed after saying thus, the three-eyed (Rudra) told his son:

28-29. "May you have the names Vināyaka, Vighnakara, Gaṇeśa and Bhavaputra, and may all these (other) Vināyakas with fierce eyes and prowess be your servants, and let them with their flowing ichor and massive body, bring about success in all undertakings.

30. In sacrifices and ceremonies to propitiate the gods, and in other deeds, you will bestow success if you are worshipped in the beginning, and hamper the whole thing if not done so".

31. Then Rudra as well as Devas poured holy water on him in golden pitchers and declared him king of the Vināyakas.

32. The Devas then praised him in the presence of Rudra.

Devas said:

33. "Bow to the elephant-faced, bow to the leader of gaṇas (group of Vināyakas), bow to Vināyaka (the chief), bow to the valiant.

34. Bow to the creator of obstacles, bow to the serpent-girdled, bow to him who rose from the mouth of Rudra, bow to the pot-bellied. O lord of all, we prostrate before you to remove all obstacles".

35. The great Gaṇeśa thus praised by the gods, and anointed by Rudra, became the son of Umā.

36. All this occurred in the tithi Caturthī. Hence Caturthī is the most important of all tithis.

37. O king, on this day if one eats only sesamum and worships Gaṇeśa, the lord will certainly be pleased.

38. He who recites this stotra and he who listens to it never encounter any obstacles.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

The Origin of Serpents

Earth said:

1. O Varāha, be pleased to tell me how the mighty serpents arose by contact with your body.

Varāha said:

2. After hearing about the origin of Gaṇapati, king Prajāpāla asked the sage (Mahātapas) in a soft voice.

Prajāpāla said:

3. O sage, be pleased to tell me how the crooked serpents were born and how they got the enmity of Garuḍa.

Mahātapas said:

4. When Brahmā was creating, he first conceived in his mind his son Kaśyapa to beget Marīci.

5. Dakṣa's beautiful daughter Kadrū became his wife. In her be begot many valiant sons.

6-7. Ananta, Vāsuki, Kambala, Karkoṭaka, Padma, Mahāpadma, Śaṅkha and Kulika were the chief among them.

8. The earth was filled by the progeny of these.

9. They were all crooked, heinous and violent, and with their fangs stung people and reduced them to ashes.

10. Their contact was reducing human population day by day severally.

11. Finding their kind thus becoming steadily reduced, men went to the great god Brahmā, the refuge of all.

12. They flocked to him who was seated on the lotus, and told him.

13. "Protect us, O god, from these venomous serpents. Please realise that (otherwise) all men and beasts will be soon reduced to ashes.

14. What was created by you is being annihilated by the serpents. Please do what is fit to avert this danger".

Brahmā said:

15. Doubtless I shall give you protection. You may all go to your homes in confidence.

16. When they were all gone, Brahmā called the serpents Vāsuki and others, and cursed them in great anger.

Brahmā said:

17. Since you are annihilating my progeny, the men, in another age, in the Svāyambhuva manvantara, by a curse of the mother, you will face a serious decline.

18. Said thus by Brahmā shivering with anger, they fell at his feet and implored:

The serpents said:

19. O god, we were made crooked by nature by you. Our venom, cruelty, and the use of eye as weapon were all given by you. The intensity of all that was given may be reduced.

Brahmā said:

20. Granting that I have created you crooked, what right have you to eat away men every day?

The serpents said:

21. O god, prescribe us a limit and allot us separate regions.

22. Hearing the words of the serpents, Brahmā said: "I shall make for you an agreement with men.

23. Listen with attention my verdict.

24. Pātāla, Vitala and Sutala are the regions allotted to you. You may all have your abode there.

25. I ordain that you shall enjoy all pleasures there and remain there till the seventh manvantara.

26. At the beginning of Vaivasvata manvantara you will become the relations of Devas as well as of Garuḍa the wise.

27. Then all your progeny will be consumed by fire but for your own selves there will be no danger.

28. The end of such serpents as are fierce and insolent will certainly occur, but not of others. You may eat and bite a person if he is so destined, and also to retaliate when somebody injures you.

29. You should move away in fear from persons who recite the mantras, or take in the medicine or wear the garuḍamaṇḍala (yantra) (all these being precautions against snake bite). O Earth, otherwise you will bring about your own disaster".

30. Thus said by Brahmā, the serpents went to the netherworld allotted to them.

31. And gaining in the end, Brahmā's relenting mood, they remained in Pātāla with satisfaction.

32. All this happened on the Pañcamī tithi. So this tithi is auspicious and capable of removing all sins.

33. If one remains austere on that day, gives up all that is sour in food and bathes the (images of) Nāgas in milk, they become friendly towards him.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Origin of Skanda

Prajāpāla said:

1. O great sage, how was Skanda born out of Ahaṁkāra (Ego)? Please clear my doubt in this matter.

Mahātapas said:

2. From Puruṣa, considered as the highest of all Tattvas, arose Avyakta which is of three kinds.

3. Between Puruṣa and Avyakta, there arose Mahat which is also known as Ahaṅkāra.

4. Puruṣa is called Viṣṇu, and is also known by the name Śiva. Avyakta is Umā or Śri (Lakṣī).

5. By the union of these two (Puruṣa and Avyakta) arose Ahaṅkāra, also known as Senāpati and Guha. Listen O king, I shall narrate to you his origin.

6. The first is Nārāyaṇa. Out of him arose Brahmā, and then Svāyambhuva, and others like Marīci from the sun.

7. Thereafter came creation consisting of gods, demons, Gandharvas, men, birds, beasts and all other beings.

8. When the creation was thus progressing, the powers of gods and demons began to fight each other in order to gain victory.

9. Among the demons there were strong leaders of warlike Hiraṇyakaśipu, Hiraṇyākṣa, Vipracitti, Vicitra, Bhīmākṣa and Krauñca.

10. These mighty warriors were gaining victory over the gods in the battle every day.

11. Seeing the defeat of gods, Bṛhaspati said: "O gods, your army is without a proper leader.

12. It is not possible for a single Indra to manage the whole army. So quickly search for a commander."

13. Thus told, the gods went to Brahmā and prayed to him to give them a commander.

14. Brahmā then entered into serious thought to find out what he could do in this predicament of Devas, and his mind then fell upon Rudra.

15. Then led by Brahmā, Devas, Gandharvas. Ṛṣis, Siddhas and Cāraṇas went to mount Kailāsa.

16. Seeing there the great god Śiva, the lord of all beings, Indra and the other gods praised him.

The gods said:

17. O Maheśvara, the three-eyed god, lord of all beings, we supplicants bow to you. O lord of Umā, lord of the worlds, lord of Maruts, protect us all.

18. O god everlasting and holding the trident in hand, and illumining the whole world with the rays of the moon on the locks of matted hair, protect us who have come to you out of the fear of demons.

19. You are the first of gods, the best of men, Hari, Bhava, Maheśa, the destroyer of Tripuras, all-pervading, the enemy of demons, the most ancient, the bull-bannered. O great god, protect us.

20. You are the husband of Pārvatī, and the great lord worshipped by all gods. You are Gaṇeśa and the lord of all beings. For averting danger to us, protect us from the fierce demons.

21. You are established in Tattvas like the Earth; parti-

cularly you are of the nature of sound in the sky. You are hidden two-fold in fire, threefold in water, fourfold in earth and five-fold in qualities.

22. In the tree you are of the nature of fire, in stone you are of the nature of truth, in sesamum you are of the nature of oil. O Maheśvara, protect us who are oppressed by demons.

23. O three-eyed god, when there was no stem of the universe, and there was no sun, moon or Indra, then you alone remained beyond the purview of any reasoning.

24. O lord of gods, wearer of the garland of skulls, bearer of the crescent moon on the head, resorter to the cremation ground, smearer of ashes all over the body and encircled by serpents, you are capable of protecting us.

25. You are the Male and the beautiful daughter of the mountain is your Energy. You are fierce to the whole world with your trident, but the three sacrificial fires (Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya and Dakṣiṇa) remain in your three eyes.

26. In the form of your matted hair remain all oceans, all great mountains and all rivers. The whole universe is your body, though men without proper inner vision see only the physical aspect.

27. You are Nārāyaṇa, the source of the universe. Similarly, you are the great Brahmā. By the difference in the Guṇas and difference in the fires and by the difference in the yugas you remain threefold.

28. O lord, all these chieftains of the gods now seek your favour. O you Rudra, who shine with ashes, we bow to you again, be pleased to save us all.

Mahātapas said:

29. Thus praised by Devas, Rudra asked them as to what he was to do.

The gods said:

30. O great god, give us a commander. That is the desire of Brahmā and others.

Rudra said:

31. O Gods, be free from anxiety. I shall give you a com-

mander. Good time will befall the people.

32. Saying thus, he sent away Devas and then excited the Śakti (Energy) in him for producing a son.

33. By this excitement there arose Kumāra glowing like fire, holding Śakti (lance), the embodiment of knowledge.

34. O king, the origin of Kumāra is different in different manvantaras.

35. What remains in the body as Ahaṅkāra, the same appeared as Senāpati for a purpose.

36. When he was born, Brahmā together with Devas worshipped him and Śiva.

37. The Senāpati was thus propitiated by all the gods, sages and Siddhas. He then asked gods to give him a plaything and a pair of companions.

38. Hearing this, the great Śiva said: "I shall give a cock as your plaything and Śākha and Viśākha as your followers. You are the leader of all beings and you become the commander of the army (of Devas)".

39. Then Rudra and other gods all praised profusely Skanda the commander.

The gods said:

40. "O lord, Maheśvara's son, six-faced, cock-bannered, the issue of fire, Skanda, may you be the commander of the army of gods.

41. O Kumāra, a terror to the enemies, the smasher of the Krauñca mountain, son of Kṛttikā, son of Śiva.

42. O the foremost of all beings, giver of joy to fire, son of the lord of all beings, three-eyed god, we bow to you."

43. Thus extolled by Devas, the son of Śiva grew up and became resplendent like the dozen suns and of matchless valour.

44. O king, he illumined the whole world by his effulgence.

Prajāpāla said:

45. How is it that you referred to him as the son of Kṛttikā, son of fire, and the son of six mothers?

Mahātapas said:

46. What I narrated relates to the first birth of Skanda.

But the gods, by their omniscience knew about the future also and extolled him accordingly.

47. In the second birth of Skanda, Kṛttikā, Fire, Mothers and Pārvatī were the causes of his origin.

48. O great king, I have told you the secret of the birth of Ahaṅkāra (as Skanda) and this is a secret which pertains to self-knowledge.

49. Skanda is a great god and he dispels all sins. During his anointment, Brahmā allotted to him the Ṣaṣṭhī tithi.

50. On that (Ṣaṣṭhī) day, if one worships him with concentration of mind, and eating only fruit, he becomes blessed with child if he is childless, and attains wealth if he is poor.

51. Whatever man desires, he attains (by worshipping him on that day).

52. He who recites the stotra of Kārttikeya (Skanda), in his house the children get health and prosperity.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Origin of Sun

Prajāpāla said:

1. O Brahmin, how did light attain embodiment? Please clear my doubt in this matter.

Mahātapas said:

2. When this eternal soul, the power of knowledge, desired to form a second, there arose light.

3. This was known as Sūrya (Sun) and Bhāsvān and all the radiance contained in it, illumined the three worlds.

4. In it were seen all gods, Siddhas and sages. Since it was self-born, the appellation *Sūrya* came into vogue.

5. From it the latent lustre assumed a body. This is called *Ravi* by the Vedic seers.

6. Since it illumines all the worlds from the high sky, it is called *Bhāskara* (from *bhās* to illumine).

7. Since it produces the day (*divasa*), it is known as *Divākara.* Since it is the beginning (*ādi*) of the universe, it is called *Āditya.*

8. From its lustre arose twelve suns, and the principal one among these now revolves round the world.

9. Seeing it pervade the entire universe, the gods came out and praised it.

The gods said:

10. "You are the first-born in the world. You protect the world and also destroy it at the time of deluge. When you rise, you enliven the whole universe. We always bow to you.

11. You spread light everywhere. You are the heat in sacrifices. You ride in a chariot pulled by seven steeds, fast and never tardy.

12. You are Prabhākara, Ravi and Ādideva, and the soul of all that is moving and stationary. You are Brahmā, Varuṇa and Yama. You are also the past and the future, so say the Siddhas.

13. You are the Veda, you are effulgence, you destroy all enemies. Protect us all who have sought refuge in you. You are to be known through Vedānta. In sacrifices you are known as Viṣṇu.

14. Be pleased at our prayer, and protect us all, O God."

15. When thus extolled by Devas, the Sun assumed a gentle form and shed lustre on them.

16. The fierceness thus became reduced for Devas. It was in the tithi Saptamī that the sun became embodied.

17. He who worships Sūrya on that day, gets all desires fulfilled.

18. This ancient story of the sun has been thus narrated to you, O king. Now, hear the story of Mothers in the first manvantara.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

The Origin of Mātṛgaṇa

Mahātapas said:

1. There was a powerful demon named Andhaka who had made all gods subservient to him by a boon got from Brahmā.

2. Being made his servants and driven out of mount Meru, they were very much afraid of Andhaka and sought refuge in Brahmā.

3. Seeing the gods, Brahmā asked them the cause of their arrival there.

The gods said:

4. O grandfather, four-faced, we bow to you and seek your protection from Andhaka who is harassing us.

Brahmā said:

5. "O gods, I am helpless to protect you from Andhaka. So we will seek the help of Śiva the great god.

6. But I have already given him a boon the effect of which cannot be nullified and his body will not touch the earth.

7. The one person who can kill him is Rudra. So we will all go to Kailāsa and see him".

8. So saying, Brahmā along with the other gods, went to Śiva. Śiva rose up and received them and then asked Brahmā.

Śambhu said:

9. With what purpose have all of you gods come to me. Command me soon.

The gods said:

10. "Save us from the wicked and powerful Andhaka".

11. When the gods were thus reporting to Śiva, Andhaka came there with a big army.

12. His aim was to kill Śiva in battle with all the four divisions of the army, as also to kill his consort Pārvatī.

13. When the demon thus suddenly appeared ready with all weapons, the gods ranged themselves with Rudra.

14. Rudra then called mentally Vāsuki, Takṣaka and Dhanañjaya, and made for himself a waist girdle of them.

15. The big demon called Nala then assumed the guise of an elephant and quickly began to attack Śiva.

16. Nandin (the vehicle of Rudra) indicated the demon by a sign to Vīrabhadra (the army chief), who thereupon assumed the form of a lion and quickly killed him.

17. He then peeled off the skin of that elephant dark like collyrium and presented it to Śiva who wore it.

18. From then on Śiva became the wearer of elephant's skin.

19. Wearing this skin, and ornamented with the serpents, Śiva with his trident in hand and accompanied by his Gaṇas, rushed towards Andhaka.

20. Then started a fierce battle between gods and demons. the guardians of quarters like Indra, Skanda the commander and the gods fought in the battle.

21. Seeing this Nārada quickly went to Viṣṇu and informed him of the severe fighting between gods and demons in Kailāsa.

22. Hearing this, Viṣṇu took his disc and rode on Garuḍa to that place and fought against demons.

23. Although much relieved at the intervention of Viṣṇu, the gods were full of despair and were taking to their heels.

24. When the gods thus became dispirited, Rudra himself darted towards Andhaka and engaged him in a terrible fight.

25. He pierced Andhaka with his trident, but from the blood that fell from his body, arose numerous other Andhakas.

26. At this wonder, Rudra caught up the original Andhaka in the trident and began to dance.

27. The other (secondary) Andhakas that came were all annihilated by Viṣṇu with his disc.

28. With blood and ice in the trident, Rudra rose up in anger.

29. By this anger, there arose from his mouth a fierce flame. The goddess in this form is known as Yogeśvarī.

30-32. Then Viṣṇu produced another goddess having his own form: so did Brahmā, Kārttikeya, Indra and Yama. Viṣṇu then created another having his form at the time of raising up the earth. These together with Māheśvarī and Māhendrī are the eight Mothers.

33. I have thus told you about the cause as well as the form of these goddesses.

34. The eight goddesses have as their aspects love, anger, greed, pride, stupefaction, rivalry, malignity and tolerance respectively.

35-37. Know love to be Yogeśvarī, anger as Māheśvarī, greed Vaiṣṇavī, pride Brahmāṇī, stupefaction Kaumārī, rivalry Indrajā, malignity Yamadaṇḍadharā and tolerance Vārāhī.

38. The group love etc., constitute their bodies. They assumed the forms as I have told you now.

39. When the blood of Andhaka was completely drawn by these goddesses, his Māyā (magical power) became extinct and he became a Siddha.

40. I have now told you all this which is the nectar of self-knowledge.

41. O king, he who listens to this account of the origin of Mothers, can get protection everywhere.

42. He who recites this, becomes blessed in the world and finally attains the world of Śiva.

43. To these Mothers the tithi Aṣṭamī was ordained by Brahmā. By worshipping them (on that day) with devotion eating only Bilva, one attains their favour, wealth and health.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Origin of the Goddess Durgā

Prajāpāla said:

1. How was the auspicious Durgā, who is Kātyāyanī and Māyā, born with a separate body out of the primordial subtle state.

Mahātapas said:

2. Once there was a valiant king named Sindhudvīpa, a manifestation of Varuṇa. He was performing severe penance in the forest with a view to begetting a son who would kill Indra.

3. With this determination he stood fast in constant penance emaciating his body.

Prajāpāla said:

4. How was he offended by Indra that he wished to get a son to kill him ?

Mahātapas said :

5. In his former birth, he was the son of Tvaṣṭā, and being immune against the attack of any weapon, he was killed with foam.

6-7. Killed by foam, he was dissolved in it. Then he was born in Brahmā's line as the valiant Sindhudvīpa, and he performed penance always thinking of his enmity to Indra.

8. After a long time, the auspicious river Vetravatī assumed a beautiful human form and went to the place where the king was engaged in his austerities.

9. Seeing her in that beautiful form the king's mind was disturbed and he asked her who she was.

The river said:

10. "I am the wife of Varuṇa, the lord of waters and my name is Vetravatī. I came here loving you.

11. He who rejects a woman who approaches him with intense desire, although she belongs to another, brings upon himself a sin like the one on killing a Brahmin. Knowing this, accept me".

12. Said thus, the king enjoyed her heartily.

13. In Vetravatī was born immediately a son named Vetrāsura who was resplendent like the dozen suns, mighty and brilliant, and he became the king of Prāgjyotiṣa.

14-15. In due course he became a powerful and courageous youth, much lucky, and he conquered the whole world consisting of seven islands and then, going up the Meru mountain, conquered Indra, then Agni and then Yama.

16. Indra, when vanquished, went to Agni, Agni when vanquished went to Yama, Yama when vanquished went to Nirṛti, and Nirṛti when vanquished went to Varuṇa.

17. Varuṇa with Indra and others went to Vāyu, and Vāyu went to Kubera with them.

18. Kubera went to his friend Śiva. The Asura was chasing them all with his club, and so he too came to Śivaloka.

19. Śiva, knowing that he could not be easily killed, took the gods to Brahmā worshipped by Siddhas and others.

20-21. There Brahmā, having created the world, was engaged in meditating on Gāyatrī, the Māyā of the Supreme Being, within the water which was flowing from Viṣṇu's feet.

At this Devas cried aloud:

22. "O Brahmā, protect all of us Devas and sages, who have now come to you being harassed by the demon (Vṛtra)".

23. Prayed thus, Brahmā looked at Devas and contemplated on Māyā by whose prowess there will be no Asuras or Rākṣasas (left to harass them).

24-26. Then appeared there out of the water the great Goddess, a maiden wearing garlands and crown, clad in white cloth, with eight hands each holding a divine weapon, disc, conch, mace, rope, sword, bell, bow (and arrow) and with a quiver, riding on a lion.

27. She fought with the Asuras with great agility for a thousand divine years and with various divine weapons.

28. Finally the demon Vetrāsura was killed by her in battle and there was then a great shout of joy in the ranks of Devas.

29. When the Vetrāsura was thus killed, the gods bowed in reverence. Śiva uttered praise.

Maheśvara said:

30. "Hail goddess Gāyatrī, Mahāmāyā, the great Devī, the highly auspicious.

31. I bow to you O Maheśvarī, mother of Vedas, with celestial sandal smeared over the body adorned with celestial garlands and necklace, and remaining in letters.

32. (I bow to) you who remain in all the three worlds, in the three Tattvas, in the three fires, hold the trident, have three eyes and are fierce in face and eyes.

33-34. I bow to you Sarasvatī, the daughter of Brahmā, Mahāmāyā, lotus-eyed, shedding ambrosia, omnipresent, the lord of all beings, Svāhā, Svadhā,[1] O Mother.

35. (I bow to you) who arose from Bhava, the Perfect, resembling the moon in lustre, with resplendent body, the great knowledge, capable of being known only by the great, the destroyer of mighty demons.

36. O you goddess who rose from the great Intellect, free from sorrow, the goddess of the hunters, you are justice, you are fortune, you are speech, you are the cow, you are the everlasting.

37. I bow to you, O great goddess; you are intelligence, you are opulence, you are the Praṇava, you are the Tattvas. You do good to all beings."

38-39. When she was thus extolled by the great Rudra and hailed by the gods, Brahmā came out of the water and saw her fully gratified.

40. Seeing her and knowing that the purpose of Devas had been accomplished, he spoke to them thinking of the future.

Brahmā said:

41. "Let this beautiful goddess go to the mountain Himavān and all of you go there and offer her worship.

42. She should be worshipped with all concentration of mind on Navamī tithi. She will then certainly give boons to the whole world.

43. On the Navamī day if a man or woman fasts taking only some flour, he or she gets all desires accomplished.

44. He who recites the above stotra by you every morning, will get all boons from you and the goddess, and will also surmount all calamities.

45. Having said thus to Śiva, Brahmā spoke to the goddess:

46. "O goddess, you have to render us another great service in future by killing the demon Mahiṣāsura".

47. Then, O king, Devas left the place and installed her in the Himālayas and paid her homage. Since she was thus honoured (*nandita*) she came to be known as *Nandā*.

48. He who listens to this account of the origin of the goddess and recites it himself, gets freed of all sins and attains salvation.

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1. 'Śvāhā' and 'Svadhā' are expressions uttered when offering oblations in fire respectively to Devas and Pitṛs.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Origin of Diks

Mahātapas said:

1. "O king Prajāpāla, listen intently to the story of the origin of diks (quarters) from the ears (of Brahmā).

2. When the first creation was in progress, Brahmā became anxious as to who would hold all that he created.

3. As he was thinking thus, there arose from his ears ten radiant girls.

4. Among them six were more important, namely Pūrvā (East), Dakṣiṇā (South), Pratīcī (West), Uttarā (North), Ūrdhvā (the upward direction) and Adharā (the downward direction).

5. Then amidst them arose four, particularly attractive, auspicious and endowed with great dignity.

6-7. They asked the sinless Brahmā earnestly to give them their quarters as well as husbands to live with there.

Brahmā said:

8. "O lovely girls, this universe is ten crore broad and in this vast expanse you can choose to your liking and tell me soon.

9. I shall also create sinless and beautiful husbands for you. Go you each to the place you like.

10. Thus told, they went to the regions they liked. And Brahmā soon created the powerful guardian deities of the quarters.

11. Then Brahmā arranged their marriage.

12-13. One he gave to Indra, another to Agni, the third to Yama, the fourth to Nirṛti, the fifth to Varuṇa, and one each to Vāyu, Kubera and Īśāna. Ūrdhvā he himself took and gave Adharā to Śeṣa.

14. Then Brahmā allotted the tithi Daśamī to them. Daśamī became their favourite.

15. He who observes vow on that day taking in only curd, becomes cleansed of his sins by their favour.

16. He who listens to the account of the origin of Diks, undoubtedly gets a secure place in the world of Brahmā.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Origin of Kubera

Mahātapas said:

1. Listen to the holy story of the origin of the lord of wealth from the body of Vāyu.

2. Vāyu was originally within the primordial body, but was later on given a concrete body with a purpose.

3. That was how Vāyu came to possess a concrete shape. Listen to me for details.

4. When Brahmā was creating, there arose from his mouth this air (Vāyu). It was coming out showering stones. Brahmā, therefore, stopped it and gave it a concrete shape saying "Assume a finite shape and become calm".

5. When that form was obtained, Brahmā ordained that the new being may be the keeper of the wealth of Devas. Thus came into being Dhanapati (Kubera).

6. Then being pleased, Brahmā allotted to him the tithi Ekādaśī. On that day, if one remains pure and takes in only uncooked food, Dhanada becomes pleased and gives him everything.

7-8. Such is the body of Dhanapatī capable of clearing one of all one's sins. He who listens to (the story of) his origin or recites it, accomplishes all desires and attains heaven.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Origin of Viṣṇu

Mahātapas said:

1. Manu about whom we learn now, is only a manifestation in specific form of the great Viṣṇu.

2. O king, to the Supreme Being, Nārāyaṇa, an anxiety arose, as he was bringing about creation.

3. "I have now brought into being this creation and I have

to protect it myself. It is not possible to establish the performance of duties without a body. Therefore, I shall create a body for the protection of the world".

4. O king, while the great Being was thinking thus, the whole creation appeared embodied before him.

5. Lord Nārāyaṇa then saw himself entering into it and all the three worlds constituted his person.

6. Then the Lord remembered the assurance he had to fulfil and gave boons.

7. "You are omniscient and omnipotent and you are worshipped by the entire world. You be the eternal Viṣṇu governing the three worlds.

8. You should always look after Devas and do whatever Brahmā wants. Doubtless you will be knowing everything."

9. The Lord then withdrew to his original form. And Viṣṇu evoked his own intellect.

10. The great Lord then mentally summoned Yoganidrā (cosmic slumber) and lodging therein all the creatures that arose out of the senses, entered into slumber.

11. While thus sleeping, there arose from his belly a big lotus.

12-13. It was spreading over all the seven islands of the earth and all the waters and forests and extended upto the nether world. In its interior was Meru and at its top Brahmā.

14. Seeing the new being come out of his body, Vāyu (air within) was delighted and produced the atmosphere (and said):

15. "Hold victory over illusion in the form of a conch and a sword to cut off ignorance.

16. Bear this disc which represents Kālacakra (the course of the world) and a mace to crush unrighteousness.

17. Let there be round your neck this garland which represents the string of beings, and the sun and the moon in the form of Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha.

18. For quick travel you have Garuḍa. Let the great goddess Lakṣmī be always with you.

19. Dvādaśī shall be your tithi. Any person who takes in only clarified butter on that day and meditates on you, attains heaven, be the person man or woman."

20. He is Viṣṇu and his body is constituted of Devas and Asuras. From his own self he creates, protects and destroys.

21. In every yuga he pervades everything. He is verily the Vedāntapuruṣa. No one should take him as an ordinary man.

22. He who listens to this holy account of Viṣṇu, acquires great fame and attains heaven.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

The Origin of Dharma

Mahātapas said:

1. Now listen, O king, I shall tell you about the origin of Dharma, its greatness and the tithi associated with it.

2. Formerly, the eternal and pure Brahmā, who is inferior only to the Supreme, thought of creation as well as the protection of the created.

3. Then from the right side of his body came out a person with body smeared with white unguent and wearing white garland and white earrings.

4. Seeing him who was four-footed and bull-shaped, he said: "You be the foremost of my creation and protect all these beings".

5. Thus ordained, he protects the world with all the four feet in Kṛtayuga, three feet in Tretāyuga, two feet in Dvāparayuga and a single foot in Kaliyuga.

6. Dharma was established with six divisions in Brahmins, three in Kṣatriyas, two in Vaiśyas and one in Śūdras. This lord (Dharma) is prevalent everywhere in all the islands in the earth.

7. His four feet are acclaimed as Guṇa (quality) Dravya (substance), Kriyā (action) and Jāti (genus).

8. In the Veda he is considered as having three horns, Saṁhitā, Pada and Krama.[1] He is Oṁkāra and has two heads and seven hands.

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1. *Saṁhitā* is the Veda with the words conjoined, *Pada* with the words separated, and *Krama* with each word joined with its succeeding word.

9. He was bound by the three svaras, Udātta, Anudātta and Svarita.[1] Such was Dharma.

10-11. Dharma was persecuted by Soma (moon) desirous of (getting for himself) Tārā, the wife of his own brother Āṅgirasa, and somehow escaping from him, he resorted to the expansive forest.

12-13. When Dharma was gone, the groups of gods began to wander about desiorus of killing Asuras, being bereft of dharma. The Asuras too similarly wandered about in the abodes of gods.

14. As a result of Soma's sin based on the woman, Devas and Asuras fought each other with numerous weapons.

15. Seeing them at war with each other Nārada came to his father Brahmā and spoke about it.

16. Brahmā then mounted his swan and forbade them from fighting, and asked them about the cause of fight.

17. They all said Soma to be the cause, and then he was able to see that his son Dharma had resorted to the forest because of persecution.

18. Then Brahmā went there quickly with Devas and Asuras and saw him there four-footed, bull-like and white like the moon.

Brahmā said:

19. This is my first son, the sage by name Dharma, harassed by the moon desirous of the wife of his own brother.

20. O Devas and Asuras, propitiate him so that your former position may be established.

21. Thus knowing his identity through Brahmā, Devas and Asuras extolled him.

Devas said:

22. "Bow to you, O lord of worlds, moon-like in complexion, bow to you with divine form, the guide to heaven's path.

23. Bow to you of the form of Karmamārga (the path of action) and omnipresent. The earth is governed by you, in fact all the three worlds.

24. The other worlds like Jana, Tapas and Satya are also

1. *Udātta* is the high tone, *Anudātta* the low tone and *Svarita* a combination of the two.

governed by you. Without you there is nothing, moving or stationary.

25-26. Without you the world perishes in a moment. You are (the qualities) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively manifesting in the good, the common and the bad people.

27. Bow to you the bull-shaped one with four feet, four horns, three eyes, seven hands and three joints.

28. O lord, without you, we all go astray. So give us the right path as we are ignorant. You are our great refuge."

29. Thus praised by gods, the lord of beings in bull's form, became pleased and spoke with benignity.

30. By the very look of Dharma Devas became freed from ignorance and attached to righteousness. So too Asuras.

31-32. Then Brahmā said: "O Dharma, from today onwards let your tithi be Trayodaśī. He who fasts on that day and worships you will attain you and become freed of sins.

33. This forest where you have been wandering long will be known by the name 'Dharmāraṇya'.

34. The world will see you four-footed, three-footed, two-footed and single-footed respectively in the yugas Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, and extending over earth and heaven, protecting the whole universe".

35. Saying this Brahmā disappeared while Devas and Asuras were looking on. They too went to their homes fearlessly.

36. He who recites to others this story of Dharma and he who propitiates his Pitṛs with milky food on Trayodaśī, goes to heaven and remains with gods.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Origin of Rudra

Mahātapas said:

1. "Now you listen to another account of the first appearance of Rudra," so said the great sage Mahātapas who had cut down the tree of Adharma (evil) and whose weapon was forbearance.

2. The creator with great prowess came into being and realising knowledge to be the greatest principle, was desirous of performing creation. But seeing that creation did not proceed forth, he got highly agitated in mind.

3. He was then performing penance, but there came out of himself a person reddish blue in colour with tawny eyes, valiant and free from Rajas and Tamas.

4. The person was crying (*rudan*) and Brahmā asked him not to cry (*mā ruda*). He thus became Rudra (one who cries). He then said to him that he was competent to carry on extensive creation.

5. Told thus, he plunged himself in water. And Brahmā then produced mentally his son Dakṣa who carried on the process of creation.

6. As it was proceeding, Indra performed a sacrifice to Brahmā and then Rudra came out of the water to create the world and gods.

7. He stopped the sacrifice and was very angry to see Devas, Siddhas and Yakṣas, and discarding even the beautiful damsel (Dakṣa's daughter), asked who created the world without him.

8. 'Hā, hā' he said and there issued forth from his red face flames of fire and there appeared multitudes of ghosts, goblins and vampires.

9. When the sky, earth and quarters were densely covered by them, out of his omniscience he made a bow twentyfour cubits long.

10. He then made the bowstring three-fold and took up quiver and divine arrows. He then pulled down the teeth of Pūṣā, the eyes of Bhaga and the testicles of Kratu.

11. Stripped thus of his testicles, Kratu ran away through the north-western part of the sacrificial altar. Devas became like beasts and prostrated before him.

12. Brahmā then came there and embraced gods who were thus prostrating before him, although they were offended by him.

13. Seeing Rudra he said, "O Rudra, enough of your anger, the sacrifice is obstructed". Hearing the words of Brahmā, Rudra spoke in anger.

Rudra said:

14. I was formerly created by you. These are also yours.

Then why do they not give me a share in the sacrificial offering."
This form of mine which arose out of the sacrifice, made these bereft of knowledge.

Brahmā said:

15. O Devas, for regaining your (lost) knowledge may you all propitiate Rudra by prayers. Let Asuras also do the same. Rudra will thus become pleased and will give you back your knowledge.

Thus instructed, Devas praised the great Rudra.

Devas said:

16. "Bow to the great god, three-eyed and red-eyed, wearing matted hair and crown.

17. Bow to him who is served by ghosts and goblins, who has the snake as his sacred thread (yajñopavīta), who is sthāṇu (the permanent one) and whose mouth is with terrific laughter.

18. Bow to him who uprooted the teeth of Pūṣā and the eyes of Bhaga and who will have the bull as his emblem.

19. Bow to Bhairava whose matted hair is tied upwards, who wears the elephant's skin and who resides in Kailāsa and who will kill Tripuras and Andhaka.

20. Bow to him who is fierce with tongues of fire and who bears the moon on the head.

21. Bow to him the great Lord bearing the sharp trident who will undertake Kāpālivrata and destroy Dāruvana.

22. Who is blue-necked, holds trident, has serpents as bracelets, gives blows with his mighty hands and has a fiery face.

23. Who is the creator of the three worlds, who is the embodiment of sacrifice but destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice and who is known through Vedānta.

24. Bow to Mahādeva, Śiva, Śambhu, Bhava, Kapardin, Karāla, Viśveśvara."

25. Praised thus by Devas, Rudra the eternal, holding a fearful bow, told them that he was the god of gods and asked them to say what he could do for them.

Devas said:

26. Give us, O god, the knowledge of the Vedas and Śāstras

and also of the sacrifice and its secret, if you are pleased with us.

Mahādeva said:

27. "May you all be *paśus* (beasts) and I shall be the lord of beasts. Thereby you will attain mokṣa".

28. The gods agreed and Rudra became *Paśupati* (lord of beasts).

Brahmā then spoke o Paśupati with great pleasure.

29-30. "O Rudra, let Caturdaśī be the tithi for you. On that day those who worship you fasting, and later take in only wheat food, will get your pleasure and this will lead to their liberation".

31. When thus said by Brahmā, Rudra restored to Bhaga, Pūṣā and Kratu the teeth, eyes and testicles respectively.

32. He gave to Devas all knowledge.

33. Thus occurred the emergence of Rudra from Brahmā. On account of what was detailed above, he came to be called the lord of gods.

34. The person who listens to this account early in the morning, becomes free from all sins and attains the world of Rudra.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Origin of Pitṛs

Mahātapas said:

1. O king, listen to the origin of Pitṛs I am going to tell you now.

2. Formerly Brahmā, the lord of all beings, desirous of performing creation in all its variety, thought of keeping all Tanmātrās out of his mind and engaged himself in deep meditation.

3. When he was thus in meditation, there came out of his body the Tanmātrās tawny in colour.

4. They were all horizontal in form, moving upwards and telling gods that they would drink the soma juice.

5. Seeing them who were remaining in a horizontal position

and moving upwards, Brahmā told them, "May you be the Pitṛs (manes) for all householders.

6. Those among you whose faces are upwards are named 'Nāndīmukhas'." So saying Brahmā defined their path.

7. He created for them the Dakṣiṇāyana (the southward movement of the sun), and continued the other creations silently. They then asked Brahmā to give them their means of sustenance so that they could remain happy.

Brahmā said:

8. Amāvāsī (New moon day) be your day. You will derive great satisfaction by the water given to you with the Kuśa (darbha) grass and sesamum seeds by the people.

9. On that day if people give gifts of sesamum, fasting and with devotion to the Pitṛs, they will get boons from them early.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

The Origin of Soma

Mahātapas said:

1. There was the famous mind-born son of Brahmā by name Atri. His son was Soma (Moon) who became Dakṣa's son-in-law.

2. Twentyseven renowned and honourable daughters of Dakṣa became his wives and Rohiṇī was the chief among them.

3. He was giving his love only to Rohiṇī and not to others. So they went to their father and told him about this difference in the treatment accorded to them.

4. Dakṣa asked him several times to give equal treatment to all wives, but he cared little. Thereupon Dakṣa cursed him to disappear, and as a result, he waned and vanished.

5. When Soma was thus lost, gods, men, beasts and plants began to wither, particularly the plants.

6. When the plants were thus shrivelling up, gods were worried and said that the moon is the source of all plants.

7. They seriously thought about the matter and resorted to Viṣṇu, and lord Viṣṇu asked them what he might do for them.

8. They told him that Soma was lost because of a curse of Dakṣa and then Viṣṇu suggested that they may churn ocean putting the plants into it.

9. After telling Devas thus, Viṣṇu mentally called Rudra and Brahmā and also the serpent Vāsuki for the churning rope.

10. They all churned the ocean and Soma reappeared.

11. He who is soul within the body and is called Kṣetrajña, is this Soma who is the Jīva (life).

12-13. He attained an invisible form which sustains gods and men and these sixteen deities, as also the trees and plants. His visible form Rudra bore on his head.

14. Water also is his form and hence he is considered universal. Brahmā then gave him Pauṇamāsī (Full moon day) as the tithi.

15. O king, if one fasts and gives him offerings on that day, he bestows on him food, knowledge, effulgence, health and wealth.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Former Story

Mahātapas said:

1. O king, I shall tell you about kings known as Maṇijas (born of the gem[1]) in the first Tretāyuga, in whose line you are born.

2. You were known as Suprabha in Kṛtayuga and you are now born as the famous Prajāpāla.

3. Others will be born as mighty kings in Tretāyuga. Dīptatejas will be born as Śānta.

4. King Suraśmi will become Śaśakarṇa, Śubhadarśana will become Pāñcāla.

5. Suśānti[2] will be born in the line of Aṅgas; so too Sundara,

1. See chapter XI verses 83, 84.
2. Earlier the name is given as Sukānti.

Sunda as Mucukunda and Sudyumna[1] as Turu.

6. Sumanas will be born as Somadatta, Śubha as Saṁvaraṇa, Suśīla as Vasudāna and Sukhada as Āśupati.

7. Śambhu will be born as Senāpati, Kānta[2] as Daśaratha and Soma as Janaka. All these about kings in Tretāyuga.

8. These kings will rule the world well, perform various sacrifices and will finally attain heaven.

Varāha said:

9. The King, after listening to this account which pertains to the nectarine Brahmavidyā, was extremely pleased and went to the forest to perform penance.

10. And attaining high spiritual potency, he gave up his body, became one with Brahman and was merged in Hari.

11. (Earlier) the king had gone to Vṛndāvana and praised there Hari called Govinda.[3]

The king said:

12. I bow to the great god with the whole universe as body, the chief of the cowherds, brother of Indra, of immeasurable greatness, clever in regulating the movements in worldly existence, and bearer of the earth.

13. I bow to you, O Kṛṣṇa the great lord of cows, the sole source of happiness in the ocean of worldly existence, terrible with the numerous waves of sorrow and whirlpools of advancing age.

14. I bow to you Janārdana, the friend of all, (who give solace to me) who are always battling with diseases, ill-disposed persons and hostile planets.

15. O holder of glowing disc, you are the highest of the omniscient gods. The whole world is pervaded by you. O leader of the Gopas, save me from the fears of mundane life.

16. You are the most exalted of gods. You are the most ancient. You shine like the moon. O imperishable God with

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1. In the earlier enumeration name is Pradyumna.
2. The name given earlier is Sudānta
3. This should be presumed to be a praise of the future Kṛṣṇāvatāra of Viṣṇu. It is also possible that this part of the chapter is a later addition.

fire in the mouth, save me from falling a prey to worldly allurement.

17. In the wheel of worldly life revolve men deluded by your Māyā. O great lord, who is able to cross this enveloping Māyā ?

18. O lord of Gopas, those courageous souls that meditate on you who are free from a descent, free from touch, colour and smell and without a name, but the greatest of all, get liberated from worldly bondages and attain salvation.

19. I always bow to him who is spoken of in Purāṇas as bearing the disc and lotus, but is really beyond sound, in the form of the sky, without a finite body, without action, but full of auspiciousness.

20. I bow to Viṣṇu the eternal, Trivikrama who occupied the three worlds, who has four forms,[1] the lord of the whole universe, who is Śiva as well as Indra.

21. O lord, you create everything moving and stationary and you dissolve the entire creation. Lead me as I am desirous of salvation, to that place soon from where the yogins do not return.

22. Hail great Govinda, hail Viṣṇu Padmanābha, hail the omniscient, hail the unbounded, hail the lord of the worlds.

Varāha said:

23. Thus praising the lord, the king gave up his body and became permanently merged in the Supreme soul, Govinda.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

The Story of Dīrghabāhu

Earth said:

1. O great lord, be pleased to tell me how you are to be worshipped by men and women with devotion.

1. The four *vyūhas* namely Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

Varāha said:

2. I am to be attained by meditation, not by money or incantation. Still, I shall tell you about the physical restraints to be observed by devotees.

3. Listen to the observances to be adopted by a person who is dedicated to me in mind, action and word.

4. The mental observances are non-violence, truthfulness, faith and celibacy.

5. The bodily observances are taking food only once a day and fasting at night.

6. The oral observances are learning the Veda, reciting the glories of Viṣṇu, speaking truth and not speaking ill of others.

7. Here a story is known: There was a highly spiritual sage named Āruṇi, son of Brahmā.

8-9. He went to the forest on the bank of river Devikā to perform severe penance. Once he went to the river for a bath.

10. While performing japa after bath, he saw a fierce hunter with (bow and) arrow in hand rushing towards him.

11. He came there to kill the sage and snatch away the bark garment he was wearing.

12. The sage became extremely perturbed understanding his criminal intention, but remained there meditating on Nārāyaṇa.

13. Seeing the sage whose mind was thus immersed in meditation on Viṣṇu, the hunter became afraid, and dropping down his bow and arrow, said:

The hunter said:

14. "O Brahmin, I came here with the intention of killing you. But now on seeing you, that intention has left me.

15. I have been killing thousands of Brahmins and even more good women.

16. Will any good befall me after killing so many Brahmins? I now wish to perform penance near you. Be pleased to give me the necessary advice".

17. But the sage did not say anything in reply, thinking that the man who is guilty of killing Brahmins is a high sinner.

18. Still, desirous of acquiring religious merit, the hunter remained there. The sage took his bath and resorted to the foot of the tree.

19. After some time, a famished tiger came to the river, and attempted to kill the serene sage.

20. The sage plunged himself into the water, but the tiger was trying to drag him out. The hunter then quickly killed it.

21. A person came out of the tiger's body then. Hearing the noise (of the hunter killing the tiger) from within the water, the sage exclaimed 'Bow to Nārāyaṇa'.

22. That mantra was heard by the tiger which was about to die, and it then became transformed into a man.

23. He said, "O Brahmin, being freed from my sins and ills, I now go to that perpetual abode of Viṣṇu".

24. Told thus, the sage asked him who he was. He then told him about his former life.

25-26. "I was (a king) known as Dīrghabāhu. I was well versed in Dharma and had mastered the Vedas and known about everything good and bad. I had nothing to do with the Brahmins and was asking "what is this thing called the Brahmin".

27. At this attitude of mine, the Brahmins became angry and they cursed me to become a tiger.

28. They also said that because of my insult to the Brahmins I would lose my memory but would hear the name of the lord at the time of my death.

29. The curse pronounced by the great Vaidik Brahmins took effect on me.

30. I then prostrated before them and sought their pardon. They then said:

31. "You should take food only once in six days, and then whatever comes near you will be your food.

32. When you will be about to die, being hit by an arrow, you will hear a Brahmin uttering 'Bow to Nārāyaṇa'. Then you will attain liberation."

33. Although through another's mouth, I have now heard the name of Viṣṇu and the god is now before me although an offender of Brahmins (and thus a sinner).

34. He who adores Brahmins and himself utters the name of Viṣṇu at the time of death, becomes freed from all sins.

35. With outstretched arms I proclaim again and again the truth that the Brahmins are the gods moving in this earth and the lord is the Supreme Man."

36. So saying the king went to heaven, being freed of sins. The sage, who was thus saved, spoke to the hunter.

The sage said:

37. Since I have been saved by you from the tiger, I am pleased with you. I shall give you the boon you choose.

The hunter said:

38. The fact that you speak to me is itself a boon for me. What else have I to seek? Please advise me.

The sage said:

39. Formerly, you requested me to instruct you to perform penance. Then you were full of sins and fierce in appearance.

40-41. Now all your sins have disappeared by your holy bath in this river Devikā, by my sight and by hearing the name of Viṣṇu, and you have become pure in body.

42. So now you can ask me a boon. You may perform penance as long as you like.

The hunter said:

43. The one boon that I wish to seek is to know how Viṣṇu, about whom you said, could be attained by mortals.

The sage said:

44. The man who with intense devotion, performs vows in respect of lord Viṣṇu, doubtless attains him.

45. Knowing this, perform austerities. Do not take common food (be contented with whatever food that is available in the forest). Never utter falsehood.

46. This is the instruction and the boon to you. You may remain here practising penance as long as you like.

Varāha said:

47. The sage thus gave the boon to him who was desirous of securing salvation, and went away.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Story of Satyatapas

Varāha said:

1. The eminent hunter followed the auspicious path and began to do penance giving up regular food and meditating on the preceptor (sage Āruṇi).

2. Formerly, when he was hungry, he used to eat the fallen leaves.

3-4. But once when he was hungry and went to the foot of a tree to eat the leaves shed there, he heard a loud aerial voice prohibiting him from eating them.

5. Leaving that tree he went to another. There also he heard the same thing. The same thing happened when he went to other trees also.

6. So he stopped eating anything and began to do penance fully fasting.

7. When he was doing penance in this way, once sage Durvāsas came there and was surprised to find the hunter not only alive (in spite of his fasting) but effulgent like the blazing fire because of the penance.

8-9. The hunter bowed to the great sage and told him: "O sage, I am extremely gratified to see you. By my good fortune you have come here at a time when I have to perform śrāddha. I shall propitiate you with the fallen leaves (which alone I take)'.

10. Durvāsas, with a view to knowing the spiritual powers of this hermit who had fully subdued his sense organs and become fully purified, told him:

11. "Give me, who have come here with the intention of seeing you, well prepared food of barley, wheat and rice".

12. Told thus, the hunter began to seriously think as to how he could meet this demand.

13. When he was thus engrossed, a golden vessel with miraculous powers fell into his hand from the sky.

14. Taking it, he told Durvāsas in great reverence, "O great Brahmin, please remain here till I return after begging food and bless me".

15. The noble hunter then went out to beg alms in the not-too-distant city through forests and hamlets.

16-17. As he was going along, from tree after tree came out nymphs with golden vessels full of food of various varieties and they filled with them his begging bowl.

18. When his aim was thus achieved, he delightfully returned to the sage.

19. He placed the bowl in a tidy place, bowed to him, and said:

20. "O sage, if you are pleased to bless me, kindly take this seat and wash your feet".

21. But the sage, with a view to testing how far his penance was powerful, told him: "I am unable to go to the river, nor have I any vessel with me; how can I wash my feet?"

22. Hearing this, the hunter again began thinking as to what he could do to enable the sage to take food.

23. Meditating on his preceptor, he sought recourse to the river Devikā.

The hunter said:

24. "O excellent river, goddess, I am a hunter and thereby a sinner. Still when I pray to you, be pleased to give me help.

25. I know not a deity, I know not a mantra, I know not worship. All that I know is to meditate on the feet of preceptor and derive benefit therefrom.

26. I being such a one, have mercy on me. Please flow to the place where the sage is seated so that he may wash his feet".

27. Requested thus by the hunter, the holy Devikā moved to the place where Durvāsas was resting.

28-29. Seeing that wonder, Durvāsas was much surprised, and after washing his hands and feet, ate the food reverentially given.

30. He then blessed the emaciated hunter: "Let the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and Upaniṣads, Pada and Krama recitations of all these (Vedas), Purāṇas and Brahmavidyā dawn on you".

31. After giving this boon, Durvāsas told him that he would become a famous sage by name Satyatapas.

32. When he was thus given the boon, the hunter asked the sage: "O sage, being a hunter how can I learn the Vedas?"

The sage said:

33. As a result of your fasting, your old body has disappeared

and the present body you are having is born of penance.

34-35. Your former knowledge has perished, and a pure one has come upon the imperishable body you have now acquired. This is the truth. Therefore, O sage, the Vedas and Śāstras will always appear in your mind.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Matsyadvādaśivrata

Satyatapas said:

1. O sage, the foremost among the learned, be pleased to enlighten me on the two kinds of bodies about which you spoke.[1]

Durvāsas said:

2. Actually there are three bodies, not two, including the one for the operation of the effects of one's good and bad deeds.

3. The first body is called Adhārmic (of demerit) which is without (true) knowledge. The second resulting from proper observances is called Dhārmic (of merit).

4. The third, which is beyond senses, is for the action of the results of one's merits and demerits. It is declared so by those who have attained knowledge of Brahman.

5. And thus, including the body for the manifestation of the result of one's own good and bad deeds, there are three.

6. Your former body (body in the former aspect) was named Sin, because you were doing the sinful deed of killing living beings.

7. Now by doing good deeds and performing penance, you have acquired a Dharmic body. Thereby you have become eligible to know the Vedas and Purāṇas.

8. Upto eight years of age man is, of course, guided by others, but after that he becomes different and does things on his own.

1. The reference is to verse 33 in the previous chapter.

9. It is declared by people with Supreme knowledge that it is one and the same body that is considered as three because of different aspects. The difference between them is as between the clay and the pot.

10. The path of action laid down for the Brahmins and others (Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras) is of four kinds.[1]

11. There the first three always perform the rites prescribed by the Vedas. The fourth attends on these three.

12. He who performs penance knowing well the Vedic injunctions, certainly gains salvation.

Satyatapas said:

13. O great sage, the form of what you said as the Supreme Soul, cannot be known by even great yogins.

14. It is beyond the scope of name and form, and, as such, how can it be known ? So kindly tell me the sign by which I may know it.

Durvāsas said:

15. That which is spoken of as the Supreme Brahman in Vedas and Śāstras is the (essence of) Veda itself, the lotus-eyed Nārāyaṇa-Hari.

16. This Supreme god, Nārāyaṇa, is attained through the different sacrifices and gifts.

Satyatapas said:

17. O sage, lord Nārāyaṇa is attained by spending a lot of money and by the meritorious persons who have mastered the Vedas. Please tell me how he can be attained by those who have no money (for sacrifices.)

18. Without money it is not possible to give gifts. Those who are tied to the family will not have the mind to spend even if they have the means.

19. To such people, it appears to me, Nārāyaṇa will always be far away.

20. Tell me in particular as to by what efforts he can be reached by people of all castes.

1. This refers to the four stages of life namely Brahmacarya, Gārhasthya, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa.

Durvāsas said:

21. I shall tell you the great secret, what was done by Mother Earth when she was merging into water and moving down to the nether world.

22. The solid part of Earth was engulfed by water, and as a result, she was sinking into the lower world, Rasātala.

23. This mother of all beings, when she reached Rasātala, worshipped the great god Nārāyaṇa.

24. By the fastings and vows and other observances of Earth, Nārāyaṇa became pleased. He raised her up and restored her to her original place.

Satyatapas said:

25. O sage, please tell me what was the sort of fasting undertaken by her and what were the vratas performed.

Durvāsas said:

26-28. In the month of Mārgaśīrṣa (Dhanus), on Daśamī day the devotee should, with great control of mind, perform the prescribed rituals in fire and worship of gods, and with clean dress and pure mind eat the remains of the food offered to gods. He should then walk five steps, wash the feet and clean the teeth by chewing eight inches of the twig of a sappy tree and sip water

29-31. He should then touch the nine outlets in the body (eyes, ears, nose etc.) and meditate on the great lord Janārdana (Viṣṇu), the wearer of yellow garment and bearer of conch, disc and mace and endowed with all auspiciousness. He should then take water in his hand and reverentially offer it to Him uttering His name.

32. He should then say, "O lord, remaining without food on Ekādaśī day, I shall take food on the next day; O lord, be my refuge".

33. Then in the night he should sleep near (the idol of) the Lord reciting 'Namo Nārāyaṇāya'.

34-37. Then early in the morning, he should go to a river which preferably flows into the sea, or a tank or pond in the house (in the order of preference), and taking the mud from it utter the words, "O goddess, the existence and sustenance of all beings lie in you. Be pleased to cleanse me of all my sins. All the holy

Tirthas (places for holy bath) are made by you, so I take this mud from you and stand here, O Earth. O Varuṇa, all rasas (essences) remain in you. By bestowing them all in this mud make it fully purified". Then the mud with water should be smeared all over the body three times.

38. He may then take bath uttering Varuṇa mantra. After bath, he should observe the essentials prescribed and then go to the temple.

39-43. There he should offer worship to Nārāyaṇa saying, 'I worship the feet as Keśava, the waist as Dāmodara, thighs as Nṛsiṁha, chest as the bearer of Śrīvatsa, the stomach as the wearer of Kaustubha, the breast as Lakṣmī's Lord, the hands as the victor of three worlds, the head as the all-pervading, the disc as the bearer of disc, the lotus as the doer of all good, the mace as the valiant, and the lotus as the serene.

44. After saluting Lord Nārāyaṇa thus, he should arrange four pots of water before Him and put into them sesamum and gold and decorate them with garlands.

45. The four pots should be considered as containing water from the four oceans. In the middle a seat covered with cloth should be placed.

46. A vessel made of gold, silver or copper, or, if they are not available, one made of the leaves of Palāśa tree, should be placed on it.

47-49. This vessel should be filled with water and in it should be placed a golden image of Viṣṇu in his form as the fish with all the limbs and ornaments and worshipped with sandal, Dhūpa and different kinds of food and fruit as prescribed.

50. Then saying "O god, just as you raised up the Vedas from the nether world, raise me up (from worldly life)". He should keep awake (throughout the night).

51-54. In the morning, he should give away the four pots to Brahmins, the one on the east to a Ṛgvedin, the one on the South to a Sāmavedin, the one on the West to a Yajurvedin and the one on the north to an Atharvavedin, uttering respectively 'let Ṛgveda be pleased by this', 'let Yajurveda be pleased by this', 'let Sāmaveda be pleased by this', and 'let Atharvaveda be pleased by this'.

55. The golden image of the fish should be given to the priest

after giving him, according to the prescribed rituals, sandal, Dhūpa and cloth.

56. If the priest is one well versed in the Vedas and Upaniṣads then the result of the gift will be many times more than when given to an ordinary person.

57-58. If one shows any disregard to such a priest, he falls into hell for several lives, because one who guides the worship should be considered as a preceptor.

59. After the worship of Viṣṇu and gifts to Brahmins, they should be fed and given dakṣiṇā according to one's means on the Dvādaśī day.

60. The copper vessel with sesamum on which the image was placed should be given to a Brahmin having a family.

61. After feeding the Brahmins, the worshipper may eat along with children, silently and fully controlling the senses.

62. Now listen to the benefits that befall the performer of this Dharaṇīvrata.

63-64. If only I have a thousand mouths and life as long as Brahmā's will I be able to state in full the results of this Vrata. Still I shall say this in brief.

65-66. Seventeen million, ten million, eight million and four million years respectively constituting the four yugas together constitute a caturyuga. Seventyone such Caturyugas constitute a Manvantara.

67. Fourteen days and nights (form a pakṣa, fortnight). Thirty days make a month, and twelve months make a year.

68. Hundred years is the life of a Brahmā.

69. Even if one performs Dvādaśīvrata but once as detailed above one would reach the world of Brahmā and be there as long as Brahmā himself remains.

70. When Brahmā merges in the Supreme, he too will merge likewise, and at the time of creation again, will be born as a saintly and divine king.

71. Even sins like killing a Brahmin, committed knowingly or unknowingly, disappear from him in a moment.

72. Even a person in utter poverty or a dethroned king, will be born as a king by fasting in the prescribed manner.

73. A barren woman, following this course of worship, begets

a good son.

74. The sin of sharing a prohibited bed disappears by the observance of this vow.

75. By this fasting one who has long neglected the Brahmanic duties, gets restored to the Vaidik position.

76. Why say much, this brings about even what is unattainable in the ordinary course. Hence this should be observed by all people.

77. This was done by Earth herself when she was submerged in water. There is no need, therefore, to deliberate on this.

78. This should not be told to any one who is not righteous or has no faith; nor to any one who denounces gods and Brahmins. If it is imparted to one who is devoted to his teacher, it results in the dissolution of all sins.

79. He who undertakes this fast, gets all splendour, wealth, foodgrain and beautiful women.

80. He who recites to others the important rituals pertaining to Dvādaśī worship, or listens to such narration, gets freed from all sins.

CHAPTER FORTY

Kūrmadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. Similarly in the month of Pauṣa (Makara) amṛta was churned from the ocean, and then lord Viṣṇu, on his own accord, became a Kūrma (tortoise).

2. The tithi Daśamī on the bright half of this month is assigned to Viṣṇu in the Kūrma form.

3. On that day, as before, one should do saṅkalpa (stating the aim), and on the following (Ekādaśī) day take ritualistic bath and worship Viṣṇu with all devotion.

4-5. Adoring His feet as Kūrma, waist as Nārāyaṇa, belly as Saṅkarṣaṇa, neck as Purobhava (the first born), the hands as Subāhu (fine-armed) and head as Viśāla (broad-bodied),

and uttering mantras containing the names of the lord, offer sandal, flowers, dhūpa and naivedya of a variety of fruits.

6-7. After worshipping, a pot of water with a gem within it should be placed in front and decorated with flowers and white cloth. On it should be placed a copper vessel containing s ghee and in it should be placed an image of the lord with Mandara (resting on him) made of gold, and it should then be gifted to a Brahmin in reverence.

8. The next day (on Dvādaśī), the lord Kūrma-Nārāyaṇa should be propitiated by giving gifts to Brahmins with dakṣiṇā, and food should be taken afterwards.

9. If done in this way, all sins will disappear. You need not have any doubt about this. And it leads one out of the perils of the world, to the abode of Viṣṇu.

10. All sins disappear instantaneously and he is then born as a righteous man. The sins accumulated over several lives are eradicated by devotion.

11. The benefits stated before accrue to him and Lord Nārāyaṇa becomes very much pleased.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Varāhadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. Similarly, listen, O sage, to the worship of Viṣṇu as Varāha on Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Māgha (Kumbha).

2-3. Performing Saṅkalpa and pūjā, as stated earlier, on the Ekādaśī day with sandal paste, incense and dry fruits, the pot filled with water should be placed in front.

4-5. Then (the devotee should utter): "I worship the feet of the lord as Varāha, waist as Mādhava, belly as Kṣetrajña, chest as Viśvarūpa, neck as Sarvajña, head as Prajāpati, hands as Pradyumna, Sudarśana (disc) as Divyāstra (divine weapon), and Śaṅkha (conch) as Amṛtodbhava".

6-9. Then he should place on the pot a vessel made of gold, silver or copper, fill it with valuable materials according to his capacity, and place on it a golden image of Viṣṇu as Varāha in the form holding the earth with all its mountains and forests. Thus should be placed the golden image in the vessel filled with grain.

10. The image should be covered by a pair of white clothes and worshipped by offering sandal, flowers and dry fruits of various kinds.

11. Heaping flowers all round, he should keep awake and read the story of the appearance of the lord as Varāha.

12-13. After doing this, the next morning at sunrise, taking bath and performing worship he should give the image together with the pot to a pious Brahmin with family, who is learned in Vedas and devoted to Viṣṇu.

14. Now hear the results that accrue to a person who thus gifts the image of Viṣṇu in his form as Varāha.

15. In this life he gets happiness, prosperity, effulgence and gratification. If he is poor, he becomes rich and if without a son, gets one.

16. Everything inauspicious disappears, and auspiciousness sets in immediately as if by force. In the life beyond he gets eternal happiness. Listen to a story in this connection.

17. In the place called Pratiṣṭhāna there was a famous king named Vīradhanvā.

18. He once went to the forest for hunting, and there near the hermitage of a sage he killed numerous deer.

19-20. There, quite unknowingly, he happened to kill five[1] sons of sage Saṁvarta, who were all devoted to learning the Vedas and who had the appearance of deer.

Satyatapas said:

21. O Sage, be pleased to tell me how they looked like deer.

Durvāsas said:

22. Once they saw in the forest several young deer, just born

1. According to the reading it is fifty, but this seems to be a mistake.

but without their mother near by.

23. They took one of them each and put them in a cave, but they soon died. Sad at this they went to their father and told him about it.

The sage's sons said:

24. O father, we have been the cause of the death of five young deer, though not deliberately. So be pleased to tell as what atonement we should do.

Saṁvarta said:

25. "My father used to injure and I too. And you my sons, also have developed a tendency to commit injury.

26. You put on deer skin and perform penance for five years. You will then become purified."

27. They then put on deer skin and began meditating on the Supreme in the forest.

28. At the close of one year, King Vīradhanvā came to the place where these in deer-skin were sitting.

29-30. Seeing them at the foot of a tree, the king mistook them to be real deer and killed them.

31. But when he realised that he had killed not the deer but some Brahmins doing penance, he was struck with fear and went to the hermitage of sage Devarāta.

32. He told the sage how he happened to kill Brahmins and stood there shedding penitent tears.

33-35. Devarāta consoled him saying that he would be freed from the sin thus committed. He said that the (story of the) earth sinking into Pātāla and Viṣṇu assuming the form of a boar lifting it up, would bring about the king's purification by the lord himself.

36-37. Then the king became glad and asked him as to how the lord would become pleased that he would rid him of all his sins.

Durvāsas said:

38-39. Thus asked, sage Devarāta told him about this Vrata (detailed above).The king performed it, and as a result, enjoyed all pleasures in the world and, at the end of his life, was taken

to the world of Indra in a golden aerial vehicle.

40. Indra honoured him by rising from his seat and offering *arghya*.

Seeing Indra thus going towards him, the servants of Viṣṇu said:

41. "O Indra, you are not entitled to see him, because you are inferior to him in penance". All other Dikpālas also were similarly turned away by the servants of Viṣṇu, all of them being eclipsed by his superior lustre.

42-43. He then proceeded to Satyaloka which is unaffected by deluge and the heat which follows it and remains there now applauded by others. When Yajñapuruṣa(Viṣṇu) is pleased, what wonder is there that this happened so.

44. Worshipped in proper form, even once one attains effulgence, long life, sound health and abundant wealth and finally gets immortality.

45. When the worship is in all detail, lord Nārāyaṇa, who has the fourfold form, gives his own abode.

46-48. Just as he restored the Vedas by taking the form of the fish, and held the Mandara mountain in position by assuming the form of a tortoise at the churning of the milky ocean, so he raised up the earth from the nether world by taking the form of a boar.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Narasiṁhadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. Similarly one may worship Viṣṇu in the prescribed manner on Dvādaśī on the bright half of the month of Phālguna.

2-3. He should worship the feet as Narasiṁha, thighs as Govinda, waist as Viśvabhuk, chest as Aniruddha, neck as Śitikaṇṭha, head as Piṅgakeśa, disc (Sudarśana) as Asuradhvaṁsin (destroyer of Asuras) and conch as Toyātmā, with sandal, flowers and fruits.

4-5. A pot together with two white clothes and a gem inside should then be placed in front and over that in a vessel made of copper or wood or reed a golden image of Narasiṁha with the usual materials.

6. After performing worship on it, on Dvādaśī day it should be given to a Vaidik Brahmin.

7. I shall now tell you the result gained through this Vrata by the king named Vatsa.

8. In the land of Kimpuruṣas there was a righteous king named Bhārata and he had a son named Vatsa.

9. Vatsa was conquered by his enemies and was completely robbed of his treasury, and he went with his wife to the hermitage of sage Vasiṣṭha.

10. Vasiṣṭha then asked him the purpose of his visit.

The king said:

11-12. O sage, I have been deprived of my kingdom and robbed of my treasury by the enemies, and without any one to help me, I have now come to you. Be pleased to advise me.

Durvāsas said:

13. Thus said, Vasiṣṭha told him about this (Narasiṁha) dvādaśīvrata, and he observed it accordingly.

14. At the end of the vrata, lord Narasiṁha was pleased, and he gave him a cakra (disc) to smash his enemies in battle.

15. With that weapon, the king won back his kingdom, and after performing numerous Aśvamedha sacrifices, attained Viṣṇuloka.

16. This holy Dvādaśīvrata is thus narrated to you. Now you may do whatever you desire to do so.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Vāmanadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. In the same manner, in the month of Caitra (Meṣa),

Viṣṇu should be worshipped on the Dvādaśī day after due fasting.

2-3. The feet should be worshipped as Vāmana, the waist as Viṣṇu, belly as Vāsudeva, chest as Saṅkarṣaṇa, neck as Viśvabhṛt, head as Vyomarūpin, the arms as Viśvajit and the conch and disc by their own names (Pāñcajanya and Sudarśana).

4. After worship to the great lord in this manner, place in front, as before, the pot of water with gem within duly purified.

5. As before, place on it in a vessel (of the material mentioned earlier) a golden image of Vāmana with a white yajñopavīta.

6. Near it should be placed the Kamaṇḍalu (spouted vessel), a small umbrella, wooden sandals, rosary and seat of kuśa grass.

7. All these together should be given to a Brahmin in the morning uttering "May Viṣṇu in the form of the dwarf be pleased".

8. The story of the appearance of Vāmana in this month (Caitra) should then be recited. This is the rule. (Here is a story in this connection).

9. There was once a king named Haryaśva. He was childless and so he perform ed penance for an issue.

10. When he was performing a sacrifice for the purpose, Viṣṇu came to him in the form of a Brahmin.

11. He asked the king the aim of his deed. The king replied that it was for getting a son. The Brahmin asked him to continue what he was doing.

12. Saying thus to the king, he suddenly disappeared.

13-14. The king completed the rites and then gave (the image with all the associated things) to a poor Vaidik Brahmin saying "O Lord, just as to the issueless Aditi you were born as son, by the same truth may I also get a child".

15. By this vrata a son was born to him by name Ugrāśva and he became an emperor.

16-17. One without a son gets a son, one who wants wealth gets it, one who is deprived of his kingdom regains it. And after death he goes to Viṣṇu's abode and after remaining there for long, takes birth as a man and becomes an emperor like Yayāti, son of Nahuṣa.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Jāmadagnyadvādaśivrata

Durvāsas said:

1. In the same manner in the month of Vaiśākha (Vṛṣabha), one should perform saṅkalpa (on Dvādaśī day) and after bathing using mud, go to the place of worship.

2-3. There he should worship Viṣṇu in the following manner. The feet should be worshipped as Jāmadagnya, belly as Sarvadhārin (bearing everything), waist as Madhusūdana, thighs as Śrīvatsadhārin, hands as Kṣarāntaka, the beard as Śitīkaṇṭha, the conch and disc by their own names (Pāñcajanya and Sudarśana) and head as Brahmāṇḍadhārin.

4. After worshipping thus, he should place a pot in front as before and put on it a pair of clothes.

5. A golden image of Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma) having an axe in the right hand, should be put in a rotten vessel and then placed on it.

6. Worship should then be made with sandal and flowers of various kinds.

7. Keeping awake the whole night with devotion, it should be given to a Brahmin early in the morning the next day.

8. I shall now illustrate the result accruing from this vrata.

9. There was a mighty king by name Vīrasena. He had no sons and so he began to perform intensive penance.

10. When he was thus doing severe penance, the great sage Yājñavalkya came to him.

11. Seeing the effulgent sage thus come to him, the king rose up with folded hands.

12. The sage who was honoured thus, asked the king about the aim of his penance.

The king said:

13. O sage, I am now without a son, and so I perform these austerities so that this body of mine may steadily decline (leading to death).

Yājñavalkya said:

14. O king, enough of this severe penance. Surely you will

get a son without difficulty.

The king said:

15. O sage, be pleased to tell me how I will beget a son without difficulty.

Durvāsas said:

16. Asked by the king thus, the sage told him about this (Jāmadagnya)dvādaśīvrata to be performed in the bright fortnight in Vaiśākha.

17. By observing it with due fasting, the king got a son, the well known Nala, who even now is remembered in the world as one to be considered as with a sacred name.

18. Such is the result of this Dvādaśīvrata.

19. One who observes it will get good sons, learning, prosperity and resplendence in this life.

20. In the world beyond, he remains in the world of Brahmā for one kalpa attended by numerous Apsarases.

21. Then he will be reborn as an emperor and live for thirty thousand kalpas.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Rāmadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. In the month of Jyeṣṭha (Mithuna) similarly, after saṅkalpa in the prescribed manner, one should worship the lord with flowers of different kinds.

2-4. He should worship the feet as Rāma, waist as Trivikrama, belly as Dhṛtaviśva (the holder of the universe), chest as Saṁvatsara, neck as Saṁvartaka, hands as Sarvāstradhārin (the bearer of all weapons), the conch and disc by their names (Pāñcajanya and Sudarśana) and head as Sahasraśiras (thousand-headed). After this, as before, the pot should be placed in front.

5. As before, the golden images of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa

covered in clothes, should be worshipped in the prescribed manner, and should be gifted to a Brahmin the next morning by him who desires to accomplish his wishes.

6-7. When the advice of Vasiṣṭha was sought by Daśaratha when he was without a son, it was this that was suggested to him by the sage.

8. Grasping the secret, the king observed this and the result was Viṣṇu in a fourfold form became his sons, being pleased with him.

9. Such is the result in this world. I shall tell you the effect in the world beyond.

10. The performer enjoys the pleasures of heaven as long as Indra remains its lord. Then he takes birth as a king who would perform a hundred sacrifices (and thus becomes one like Indra himself).

11. One who performs this vrata without any desire gets all his sins removed and in the end attains eternal bliss.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Kṛṣṇadvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1-2. In the month of Āṣāḍha (Karkaṭaka) also, one may take due saṅkalpa, and after worshipping Viṣṇu in the hands as Cakrapāṇi, neck as Bhūpati, conch and disc as Pāñcajanya and Sudarśana and head as Puruṣa, and place the pot in front as before.

3. Then on a cloth over it should be placed the golden image of Viṣṇu as Vāsudeva and the other vyūhas (Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha).

4. After worship with sandal, flowers etc., it should be gifted to a Vaidik Brahmin, as before.

5. Now listen to the benefits arising from this vrata performed in the prescribed manner.

6. In the Yadu clan there was a great man named Vasudeva

He had a highly devoted wife named Devakī, but she was without a child.

7. Once Nārada came to their house, and being received with due respect, he said:

8. "O Vasudeva, please listen to this matter relating to the worship of god, after knowing which I have rushed here to tell you.

9. Earth went to the assembly of gods and said that she was unable to bear the weight (of the demons) straining her and requested them to kill (these evil-doers).

10. Thus requested, Devas thought of going to lord Nārāyaṇa, but the moment they thought of him, he appeared before them.

11-12. The great lord himself then told Devas that he would accomplish their desire by taking birth as a human being, but he would be born only to her who, with her husband, observes the fast (on Dvādaśī) in the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha.

13. Assured thus, Devas went away, and I came here to tell you about this so that you can get a worthy son.

14. By performing this Dvādaśī vrata, Vasudeva got the son named Kṛṣṇa and gained great prosperity.

15. After enjoying great affluence, he attained in the end final beatitude. Thus I have told you about the observance of Dvādaśī vrata in Āṣāḍha.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Buddhadvādaśīvrata[1]

Durvāsas said:

1. In the month of Śrāvaṇa (Siṁha) on the Ekādaśī day of the bright half, observe the vrata as before, and worship Viṣṇu with sandal and flowers.

2-3. Worship the feet as Dāmodara, waist as Hṛṣīkeśa, belly

1. The colophon at the end of the chapter gives this name but its significance is not clear.

as Sanātana, chest as Śrīvatsadhārin, hands as Cakrapāṇi, neck as Hari, head as Muñjakeśa and tuft as Bhadra.

4. After worship in this manner, place the pot in front as before, and place over it covered in a pair of clothes, the golden image of the lord as Dāmodara.

5. After worship with sandal and flowers in proper form, give it to a Vaidik Brahmin as before.

6-7. Now listen to the account of the power of this vrata which is capable of removing all sins.

8. In the Kṛtayuga there was a mighty king by name Nṛga. He was wandering in the forest for hunting.

9. Riding on his horse, he happened to enter into the interior of the dense forest full of tigers, lions, elephants, snakes and aborigines.

10. Being alone in a lonely place, he was sad and dismounting the horse, spread Kuśa grass and slept on it.

11. In the night there came near him a multitude of fourteen thousand hunters for hunting.

12. They saw there the king adorned with golden jewels and full of high effulgence.

13. They quickly ran to their master and reported to him, and he immediately started to kill the king and take away the gold and gems he was adorning on his body.

14. The other hunters also rushed there to snatch away the horse from the sleeping king.

15. At that time there arose from the king's person a divine lady decked with sandal and garlands and ornaments white in colour.

16. With a Cakra held in her hand, she killed all the hunters, and then entered his body.

17. As she was entering into the body, the king rose up.

18. Seeing her disappear in his own body and seeing all those base men killed there, the king mounted the horse and went to the hermitage of sage Vāmadeva.

19. Bowing to the sage with reverence, he asked him to be pleased to tell him as to who that lady was and who the killed hunters were.

Vāmadeva said:

20. O king, in the previous life you were a Śūdra, but you performed this Dvādaśī vrata on hearing about it from Brahmins.

21. You observed the vrata on Dvādaśī in the bright half of Śrāvaṇa month.

22. By this vrata you became a king and the goddess (of this vrata) protects you always from all dangers.

23. She who killed all these base and cruel men and protected you is this goddess.

24. Even this one goddess is capable of protecting from all dangers and bestowing (on the devotee) a kingdom. Twelve of them[1] will well bring about the position of Indra.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Kalkidvādaśīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. In the same manner, on the Ekādaśī of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada (Kanyā), one may worship the lord of lords in the prescribed manner.

2-3. He should worship the feet as Kalkin, the waist as Hṛṣīkeśa, the belly as Mlecchavidhvaṁsaka, neck as Śitikaṇṭha, arms as Khaḍgapāṇi, hands as Caturbhuja and head as Viśvamūrti.

4-5. After worship in this manner, he should place, as before, a pot in front and over it a golden image of Kalkin in a white cloth and with sandal and flowers, and in the morning it should be gifted to a Vaidik Brahmin.

6-7. O sage, now listen to the result accruing from this vrata:

Once there was a powerful king named Viśāla in Kāśī. Deprived of his kingdom by his kinsmen, he went to Gandhamādana and from there reached Badarī in a canoe, bereft of all his royalty.

8. There came the great and ancient sages Nara and Nārā-

1. The goddesses of the Dvādaśīs of all the twelve months.

yaṇa, who are worshipped by all gods.

9. Seeing the king there immersed in contemplation of the Supreme Being Viṣṇu, they were very much pleased and asked him to seek a boon from them who had gone there pleased by his meditation.

The king said :

10. "I do not know who you are and from whom I should seek the boon. I wish to get boon from him whom I am worshipping".

11. Said thus, they asked : "O king, whom are you worshipping and what boon do you wish to get ? We wish to know this. So please tell us".

12. The king replied that he was worshipping Viṣṇu and then remained silent. They then said :

13-14. "It is by the grace of that same god (Viṣṇu) that we are offering you a boon now. So tell us what you desire".

The king said:

15. Grant me the boon by which I will be able to propitiate the lord of sacrifices (Viṣṇu) by various sacrifices.

Nara said:

16. Lord Nārāyaṇa who looks after the entire world, is performing penance with me at Badari.

17. He formerly took the form of a fish (Matsya), then that of a tortoise (Kūrma), afterwards that of a pig (Varāha) and then assumed the form of man-lion (Narasiṁha).

18-19. Then he was born as a dwarf (Vāmana), and later on as the mighty son of Jamadagni (Paraśurāma). Then he took birth as the son of Daśaratha (Rāma) and killing all the base and vile people, established order in the world.[1]

20-22. One may worship Narasiṁha for ridding oneself of sins, Vāmana for removing all stupefaction, Paraśurāma for wealth, Rāma for annihilation of enemies, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa for begetting sons, Buddha for physical charm and Kalki for victory.

1. One verse relating to Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin seems to be missing here.

23. He then told him about this Dvādaśī. And observing this, the king became an emperor, and by his name Badari came to be known as Viśālā.

24. After ruling the country for long, the king retired to the forest. By performing several sacrifices he attained final beatitude.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Padmanābhadvādaśī

Durvāsas said:

1. In the same manner, on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Āśvayuja (Tulā) lord Padmanābha should be worshipped.

2-3. The feet should be worshipped as Padmanābha, the waist as Padmayoni, the belly as Sarvadeva, the chest as Puṣkarākṣa, the hands as Avyaya, the weapons as before, and head as Prabhava, and then, as already described earlier, the pot should be placed and over it the golden image of Padmanābha.

4. After performing worship with sandal, flowers etc., early in the morning the next day it should be gifted to a Brahmin.

5. Listen to the result accruing from the observance of this.

6. In the Kṛtayuga there was a valiant king named Bhadrāśva. His kingdom also came to be known by his name Bhadrāśva.

7. Once sage Agastya came to him and said that he would stay with him for a week. The king, with bowing head, agreed with pleasure.

8. The king's wife by name Kāntimatī was so beautiful that she had the splendour of a dozen suns.

9. She had five hundred co-wives but they were all devoted to her and they attended on her like servants.

10-11. Agastya saw her in her radiant beauty, the co-wives earnestly serving her and the king being delighted at her happiness.

12. He was very glad to see all this and exclaimed, "O Lord of the worlds, how good in this !"

13. On the second day seeing the beaming queen, Agastya exclaimed, "The whole world has been acquired".

14-15. On the third day, seeing her he said, "Fools do not know lord Viṣṇu, who by a single day's propitiation has given this king this gift".

16-18. On the fourth day, he threw up his arms and exclaimed, "well done, lord of the world !, well done, women and Śūdras !, well done, Brahmins !, well done Kṣatriyas !, well done Vaiśyas !, well done Bhadrāśva ! , well done Agastya !, well done Prahlāda !, well done Dhruva !" Saying thus Agastya danced in joy before the king.

19. The king with his queen, seeing him thus immersed in joy, asked him the cause of his delight.

Agastya said:

20-21. "You are a foolish king, all your followers are fools, your priests are also so, since they do not understand me".

22. Told thus, the king with folded hands, requested him to be sympathetic and tell him clearly so that he could understand.

Agastya said:

23. "In the former life, this queen was a servant in the house of the Vaiśya Haridatta, and you were her husband, a Śūdra serving in the same household.

24-25. The Vaiśya, observing Dvādaśī in the month of Āśvayuja, went to the temple of Viṣṇu and after worshipping there with flowers, incense etc., left you both there to keep guard and to keep the lamps burning.

26. When the Vaiśya was gone, you were both engaging yourselves in keeping the lamps burning throughout night.

27-28. In course of time both of you died, and due to the merit you had acquired (by attending to the duty assigned to you by the Vaiśya in the temple), you were born in the family of Priyavrata and this queen, who was originally servant of the Vaiśya, became your wife.

29-30. If this is the result of simply keeping the lamp burn-

ing in the temple for another's sake, it is beyond words to state the effect of doing such a thing for one's own sake. Hence, I said 'O lord of the worlds, how good is this !''.

31-32. The merit acquired by the worship for one year in Kṛtayuga, is acquired by the same for half a year in Tretāyuga, by quarter of a year in Dvāparayuga and by the mere utterance of the name 'Nārāyaṇa' in Kaliyuga.

33. Hence, I exclaimed 'the whole world has been acquired'.

34. The result of burning the lamp before Viṣṇu for author's sake is what has been gained by you. Hence, I exclaimed 'Fools do not know the effect of serving Hari'.

35. Since the Brahmins and Kṣatriyas perform with devotion sacrifices of various kinds they were hailed by me.

36. I do not find in this world anything more worthy than the worship of Viṣṇu. Hence, I congratulated myself saying 'O Agastya, well done'.

37. That woman is blessed who attends on her husband, because that kind of service is an indirect service of god. A Śūdra who does so, is even more blessed.

38. That woman and that Śūdra are blessed, if they attend on the twice-born. Hence, I said "Well done, women and Śūdras"

39. Although born in the Asura clan, Prahlāda proclaimed that he knew none other than Puruṣottama (Viṣṇu). Hence I said "Well done Prahlāda."

40-41. Dhruva who belonged to the line of Brahmā, went to the forest when he was but a boy, and there worshipping Viṣṇu attained an extremely glorious position. Hence I said 'Well done Dhruva !''.

42. Hearing these words of the great Agastya, the king sought his advice, but the sage was leaving for the tīrtha Puṣkara.

43. Bhadrāśva followed him to get his advice, and he was then told about this Dvādaśīvrata by the sage.

Durvāsas said:

44. "O sage, I have told you this much". Agastya then told the king:

45. "I am leaving for Puṣkara, but you will be blessed with good sons". So saying, the sage suddenly disappeared.

46. By observing this Padmanābhadvādaśī as prescribed and with fasting, the king attained the height of glory in this world.

47. Enjoying all pleasures surrounded by children and grandchildren, he finally reached the world of Viṣṇu with the blessings of Padmanābha.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Dharaṇīvrata

Durvāsas said:

1. After going to Puṣkaratīrtha, sage Agastya returned to the palace of Bhadrāśva in the month of Kārttika.

2. The righteous king duly received him with *arghya, pādya* etc., and offered a seat. He then asked him with curiosity.

The king said:

3-4. O sage, formerly you told me about the observance of Dvādaśī in the month of Āśvina. Now be pleased to tell me what is sacred in the month of Kārttika.

Agastya said:

5. O king, Dvādaśī in the month of Kārttika is spoken of as most sacred. I shall tell you about its observance and results. Listen to me with rapt attention.

6. In the manner detailed earlier, take the saṅkalpa and perform bath.

7-10. Then perform worship to Lord Nārāyaṇa. The head should be worshipped as Sahasraśiras (thousand-headed), the hands as Puruṣa (Supreme Man), neck as Viśvarūpin (universal form), weapons as jñānāstra (weapon of knowledge), chest as Śrīvatsa, belly as Jagadvasiṣṇu (the abode of all the worlds), waist as Divyamūrti (divine-bodied), feet as Sahasrapāda (thousand-footed), and the whole body together as Dāmodara. Thus perform worship in the reverse order (from head to foot).

11-12. After worship in this manner, place in front four pots smeared with white sandal and with gems within, decorated in the neck with flower garlands and placed in copper receptacles filled with sesamum and (a little) gold.

13. Consider these four pots (of water) as representing the four oceans. In their midst, as before, place the golden image of Viṣṇu wearing yellow cloth and in the form of a yogin.

14. After worship in the prescribed manner, keep awake (the whole night).

15. Then perform Vaiṣṇava sacrifice for the lord as Yogīśvara (the great yogin) in the sixteen-petalled cakra[1] devised by yogins.

16. In the morning give four pots to Brahmins, and the fifth containing Yogīśvara with particular devotion (to an exalted person like the preceptor).

17-18. Giving (to an ordinary Brahmin) is equivalent to the acquisition of Vedas, giving it to one steeped in Vedic knowledge brings double the result, giving it to an Ācārya of the Pāñcarātras[2] brings about the result a thousand-fold, and giving it to one who is learned in the secrets of all this makes the result a crore time more.

19. When the guru is available, if ignoring him the gift is given to another, it becomes useless and leads to the donor's downfall.

20-21. Persuade the guru to accept it, and then think of others, because, learned or otherwise, the guru is lord Janārdana. Whether he follows the proper path or not he is highly important.

22. If any one, after resorting to the guru, falls out with him, he is put to torment in the hell for numerous yugas.

23. After worshipping Viṣṇu and giving gifts thus, Brahmins should be fed according to one's means and given dakṣiṇā.

24. The Creator formerly performed this Dharaṇīvrata and attained his position and the eternal Brahman.

25. Similarly, the Haihaya king named Kṛtavīrya got the son named Kārtavīrya and attained the eternal Brahman.

26. Performing this vrata, Śakuntalā got through Duṣyanta the son Bharata who became an emperor.

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1. Specified mystic figure with sixteen points engraved on a metal plate.
2. The Vaiṣṇavas who follow the Pañcarātrāgama.

27. The emperors referred to in the Vedas, all got their positions by performing this vrata.

28. When Dharaṇī (Earth) sank into Pātāla, she performed this vrata and hence it is known as Dharaṇīvrata.

29. When the vrata was completed, the earth was raised by Viṣṇu in his form as Varāha and placed over the water like a canoe.

30-31. O sage, I have thus told you about this Dharaṇīvrata. He who listens to this and he who performs this, becomes freed from all sins and gets merged in Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Agastyagitā I

Varāha said:

1-2. After hearing the account of Dharaṇīvrata from sage Durvāsas, Satyatapas went to a slope of Himālaya mountain where the river there was Puṣpabhadrā (beautiful with flowers) the stone Citraśilā (beautifully shaped) and the banyan tree Bhadravaṭa (particularly attractive), and building a hermitage there, spent the rest of his life in contemplation.

Earth said:

3. Thousands of aeons have elapsed since I performed this Vrata, and now I have forgotten all about it.

4-5. By your blessing I now begin to get a recollection of all that. I am, therefore, anxious to know more.

6. Therefore, kindly tell me what Agastya did after returning to the residence of Bhadrāśva.

Varāha said:

7. When the sage returned, Bhadrāśva asked him about Mokṣadharma.

Bhadrāśva said:

8. O sage, by what means is the bondage of worldly exis-

tence snapped, and by what means the sorrows in life can be got over ?

Agastya said:

9. O king, listen well to this story relating to what is distant and what is near and based on the division into the seen and the unseen.

10. At the time when there was no day, no night, no direction, no heaven, no gods and no sun, a king named Paśupāla was looking after numerous beasts.

11. He once went to see the eastern ocean, and there, on the shore of that limitless expanse of water, saw a forest full of snakes.

12. There were eight trees and a freely flowing river. Five important persons were there moving horizontally and upwards. One of them was holding an effulgent woman.

13. The woman was holding on her chest a person having the splendour of a thousand suns and with three colours and three divisons.

14. Seeing the king, all of them became silent and still, and as soon as the king entered the forest, became combined into a single being.

15. The king was then encircled by the serpents, and he began to think about how he could kill them and effect his escape.

16. When he was thus thinking, another person having the three colours, white, red and yellow, came out of his body.

17. He asked by gesticulation where he should go. Just then there arose Mahat.

18. The king was covered by that and asked to be alert in mind. He was then confronted by the woman (who was really Māyā).

19. He was thus engulfed by Māyā. Then the lord of all beings caught him in his possession.

20. Then five other persons came there and surrounded him.

21. All these hid themselves within the king's person when the serpents came united to attack.

22. The king then appeared highly resplendent and his all sins disappeared.

23. In him were unified earth, water, fire, air and ether and all their qualities.

24. Thus Paśupāla unified all these that stood around him.

25. Seeing the king then, the tri-coloured person said to him:

26-27. "O king, I am your son, please command me to do what you wish. We decided to bind you, but we were defeated and bound by you, and we now remain hidden in your body. When I have become your son, everything else will arise of its own".

28. Told thus, the king spoke to the man.

29. "You (say you) are my son, and as a result other things arise. But I don't desire to have attachment to any of the pleasures men may have".

30. So saying he released the son, and with him others also. And freed from them, he stood alone.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Agastyagītā II

Agastya said:

1. The king made himself into a tri-coloured being and produced a tri-coloured son named Aham (Ego).

2. The son got a daughter Avabodha (consciousness) and she got a son Vijñāna (knowledge).

3. He got five sons comprehending all comprehensible objects and named Akṣa and the rest (Eye etc).

4. These (sense-organs) were the Dasyus (hostile aborigines) who were subjugated by the king.

5. In their abstract form they made an abode for themselves (in the king's person), a city consisting of nine outlets, a single pillar, four pathways, and numerous rivulets and ponds.

6. All the nine entered the city together and soon Paśupāla became the concrete Puruṣa.

7. Established in that city, the king brought the Vedas there by contemplating on them.

8. The king also arranged there for all the Vratas, rules and sacrifices laid down in them.

9. The king once felt distressed and evoked the karma-kāṇḍa (the scripture of ritualistic action), and then the Supreme lord remaining in yogic slumber, got forth a son with four faces, four hands and four feet and embodying the four Vedas.

10. From then onwards every object of sense came to be under the king's perfect control.

11. He found alike the sea and the forest, the grass and the elephant as a result of his invocation of the Karmakāṇḍa.[1]

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

The Story of Paśupāla[2]

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O sage, you have narrated this story in reply to my question. But how did it arise and by whom was it made ?

Agastya said:

2. This curious story is there and it relates to every object in the world. Its implication is the same in your body, my body, and every other being's.

3-4. Desiring to originate it and thinking of the means for it, he who arose from Paśupāla with four feet and four faces is its originator as well as propagator.

5. His son named Svara is considered as an embodiment of truth. He expounded the significance of the four Vedas to four persons and thus became venerable.

6. The first of these four was Catuḥśṛṅga (four-horned) and the second Vṛṣa (bull), the third followed their path and the fourth followed them with devotion.

7. They all heard the story of Satyamūrti (Svara). The second (Vṛṣa) then resorted to Brahmacarya.

8. As a result of Vṛṣa's dominance there arose in men the

1. The whole of this Agastyagitā is an allegory based on the principles of Sāṅkhya philosophy.

2. Many verses in this chapter are obscure.

capacity to govern servants, riding on bulls and living in the forest.

9. When he was speaking, there arose his sons suddenly fourfold, singlefold and twofold.

10. The fourfaced seeing the permanent and transient objects, thought of the means of seeing his father.

11. "The great virtues which were there in my father, I am not able to see in any of the sons of Svara.

12. The Veda proclaims that the grandson with the grandfather's name (will be like him), and this cannot be different in the case of Svara's sons.

13. I should see those virtues in some one here. But what shall I do ?" He was thinking in this way.

14. While he was thinking thus, a weapon from his father appeared there and with that Svara was churned.

15. When the churning was in progress, the fourfaced saw the head appearing like a cocoanut fruit covered in a tenfold way.

16. The four-footed then cut it off like a sesamum plant.

17. Then he cut off what had become rootless.

18. At that part arose ten[1] and afterwards the five.[2]

19. He cut them again and they were all flaming.

20. When that was cut off, a small object, onetenth of the original size, appeared.

21. That too was cut off, but then arose another small like that and white and calm.

22-23. And he saw in that his own father small like a molecule and indistinct. He then became happy and so too the father Svara.

24. Such was the man Svara, his trunk was Pravṛtti (action) and head Vivṛtti (inaction).

25. Thus arose the story and it has been narrated to you.

26. This is the earliest of all stories. He who understands its significance, performs true action.

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1. The ten indicates the indriyas, five jñānendriyas for perception and five karmendriyas for action.

2. The five represents the five elements, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Vrata for attaining the best husband

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O sage, be pleased to tell me who should be worshipped by a person desirous of getting knowledge and how he should be worshipped.

Agastya said:

2. Lord Viṣṇu alone is to be worshipped by all always, even by Devas. I shall tell you the means by which one can get boons from him.

3. He is the ultimate truth conveyed by the Vedas and sought by sages and the common people, and He is the Supreme God. Worshipping him will never be in vain.

4. The vrata to propitiate Viṣṇu told by the great Nārada to the Apsarases is well known.

Apsarases said:

5. O divine sage, son of Brahmā, we wish to have husbands. Please tell us how we can get Lord Nārāyaṇa as our husband.

Nārada said:

6. It is the rule that a question like this should be asked after respectful prostration, but you did not observe it because of your pride of youth.

7. Still, since you have uttered the name of the great Viṣṇu and what you seek is to attain him as husband, I feel you have made some amends for your fault.

8. I shall now tell you about the vrata by which Viṣṇu will give boons on his own and become the husband of the seekers.

Nārada said:

9. On the auspicious Dvādaśī day in the śuklapakṣa in Vasanta (spring season), one should fast and worship Viṣṇu at night in the prescribed manner.

10. A circle of red flowers should be made (round the idol) and the whole night should be spent without sleep and with dance

and song, vocal and instrumental.

11. The (lord's) head should be worshipped as Bhava, the waist as Anaṅga, the hands as Kāma, the belly as Suśāstra, the feet as Manmatha, and the whole body as Hari.

12. The devotee should then bow in all directions.

13. In the morning gifts should be given to a Vaidik Brahmin who is free from bodily defect.

14. After propitiating the Brahmins, the vrata should be concluded. If you observe all this, Viṣṇu will certainly become your husband.

15. The lord should also be worshipped with fine sugarcane juice and flowers like jasmine.

16. Since in your pride you did not bow to me before asking me about this, you have shown me an insult and you cannot escape (fully) from its effect.

17. Therefore in this very lake here you stand now, you will happen to laugh at sage Aṣṭāvakra and incur his curse.

18-19. You will get the great Hari as your husband, but you will face the insult of being carried away by the cowherds. But the lord will still be your husband.

Agastya said:

20. After saying this, the divine sage Nārada disappeared. They performed all that they were told to do, and Viṣṇu became pleased with them.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Śubhavrata

Agastya said:

1. O great king, listen to the best of vratas namely Śubha, by which Lord Viṣṇu may be attained.

2. This should be started on the first day in the bright fortnight of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa and on Daśamī take food only once.

3. Then at noon on that Daśamī day worship Viṣṇu. And on the Dvādaśī day, perform Saṅkalpa as before.

4. Fasting on that day, give away yava grain to Brahmins and utter the name of Hari while performing Dāna, Homa and Arcana.

5. Spend four months like this, and in the next four from Caitra month observe similarly but give barley meal as gifts to Brahmins.

6. In the next three months from Śrāvaṇa give paddy grain as gift.

7. In the month of Kārttika also observe in the same manner and on Dvādaśī worship Viṣṇu with great purity and devotion in the name of the month.

8. With full control of the senses and with saṅkalpa as before, perform rituals on Dvādaśī.

9-10. (For this) on Ekādaśī day instal a golden image of Earth, with the great mountains in front of Viṣṇu, on a pair of white clothes over layers of different grains.

11. Offer to the deity five gems (gold, silver, ruby, emerald and pearl) and keep awake the whole night.

12. In the morning invite twentyfour Brahmins and give each a cow with dakṣiṇā.

13. Also a pair of clothes, a ring (for the finger), bangles and earrings in gold.

14. The king may give a village each to the poor (Brahmins).

15. Along with the land gift, a pair of golden cows as well as a pair of clothes also may be given according to capacity.

16. A cow decorated with all ornaments may also be specially given. In this way the Lord becomes pleased.

17. The image of Earth may also be made of silver and this may be given to the Brahmin along with the other associate materials thinking of Viṣṇu.

18-19. He should also be fed and given slippers and umbrella uttering 'May lord Viṣṇu of universal form be always pleased with me'.

20-21. The merit acquired by such feeding and gifts cannot be described even in the course of many years. Still, I shall tell you a little of it. Listen to my account of what was achieved by this vrata.

22. In the Kṛtayuga there was a saintly king named Dṛḍha-vrata. He asked Lord Brahmā as to what he might do to get a son. Brahmā told him about this vrata and he performed it.

23. At the close of the vrata, the universal god (Viṣṇu) appeared before him and asked him to seek a boon.

The king said:

24. "Bless me with a son, O Lord, who will be longlived, very famous, highly virtuous, proficient in the Vedas and inclined to perform sacrifices".

25-26. The king continued: "Grant me also, O great god, the position of a sage by attaining which one will have no cause to regret".

27. Lord Viṣṇu granted the boons sought and disappeared. And a son by name Vatsaśrī was born to him.

28. He became very learned, well versed in Vedas and Vedāṅgas and performed many sacrifices, and his fame spread over the whole world.

29. The king, having attained this son by the blessing of Viṣṇu, retired to perform intensive penance.

30. With full control of the senses and absolute fasting, he began to meditate on Viṣṇu in the Himālayas and always utter the praise of Viṣṇu.

Bhadrāśva said:

31. O sage, what was the praise uttered by him and what happened to him who was praising the lord in that manner ?

Durvāsas said:

32. Resorting to the Himālayas and with mind fully immersed in Viṣṇu, the king praised him.

The king said:

33. "I bow to Janārdana of the form of water, the permanent as well as the transient, reposing in the milky ocean, the holder of the earth, the final resort of all beings, beyond all senses and the foremost among the enjoyers of the whole universe.

34. O lord, you are the first principle, the ultimate truth, all-pervading, most ancient, the best among men, beyond senses,

the foremost among those who have mastered the Vedas. Save me, O holder of the conch, mace and weapons.

35. 'O Viṣṇu, the Eternal, all that you have done at the entreaties of Devas and Asuras is for the sake of bringing about creation, though you are the ultimate.

36. Still, you assumed the form of the tortoise and other animals and you are spoken of as having taken birth several times, though actually all this is not there.

37. I bow to you, O Narasiṁha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Vāsudeva, Buddha, Kalkin, Śambhu, the destroyer of the enemies of the gods.

38. I bow to you, O Nārāyaṇa, Padmanābha, Puruṣottama, worshipped by all gods and the foremost of all-knowing.

39. O eternal god, I bow to you who assumed the fierce man-lion form, the tortoise-form expansive like the mountain, the fish-form extensive like the ocean and the boar form.

40. All this (assumption of different forms) is for the sake of creation (of the world). Really you have no form whatsoever. To facilitate meditation, a form is conceived for you, the ancient Man.

41. You are the first sacrifice by yourself. You are the accessories of the sacrifice. You are the offering in the sacrifice. You are the sacrificial animal. You are the priest and the clarified butter. Groups of gods and sages sacrifice for you.

42. The entire world, animate and inanimate, is in you. In you are the gods, time and fire. O Janārdana, you are undivided. Please grant me my desire.

43. I bow to you Hari, lotus-eyed. I bow to you the finite and infinite. I seek refuge in you. Lift me up from the worries of the world".

44. Thus praised by the great king standing under a big mango tree, the lord became very much pleased.

45. And he came there in the form of a dwarfish Brahmin. As soon as he came, the big mango tree also became a small one.

46. Seeing that great wonder, the saintly king began to think about how the big tree became small.

47. Then he was able to understand that the arrival of the Brahmin was the cause and that this very fact showed, that the visitor was the lord himself.

48. He prostrated before that Brahmin and prayed.

49. "O Lord, you are certainly the great Viṣṇu come here to bless me. Be pleased to show me your genuine form".

50. Thus requested the lord appeared before him in his original form bearing the conch, disc and mace, and told him:

51. "O great king, ask me the boon you wish to get. When I am pleased, the whole world to me is but a sesamum seed".

52. Told thus, the king became extremely delighted and asked for mokṣa and nothing else.

53. Thus requested, the lord said again:

54. "Since at my arrival this expansive mango tree (*āmra*) became small (*kubja*), this tīrtha will hereafter be known as *Kubjakāmra*.

55. Not only Brahmins, but even the animals, when they give up the body here, will get salvation that is the yogin's."

56. After saying thus, the lord touched the king with the tip of his conch and immediately he attained salvation.

57. Therefore, O king, you too resort to this lord so that you may not revert to worldly existence.

58. He who listens to this story and he who recites it daily in the morning, attains liberation.

59. And, O king, he who performs this holy Śubhavrata, will get great prosperity and, in the end, will be merged in Him.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Dhanyavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about the Dhanyavrata by performing which even a poor man becomes quickly rich.

2. In the tithi Prathamā in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, worship in the night Viṣṇu in the form of fire.

3. Worship the feet as Vaiśvānara, the belly as Agni, chest as Havirbhuja, hands as Draviṇoda, head as Saṁvarta and the entire body as Jvalana.

4-5. After duly worshipping Janārdana in this manner, prepare an altar of fire in front and perform homa in it with the above mantras. Then eat cooked barley with ghee.

6. In the dark half of the month also the worship should be done in the same manner. This may be continued for four months.

7. During the next four months from Caitra eat milky food with ghee and during the four months from Śrāvaṇa eat barley meal. The vrata is thus brought to a close.

8. At the end of the vrata make a golden image of fire, cover it with a pair of red clothes, decorate it with red flowers and anoint it with saffron.

9-10. Then give the image to a Brahmin of faultless body along with the pair of red clothes uttering the following mantra.

11. "I am gratified (*dhanya*), I perform righteous deeds (*dhanyakarmā*), all my actions are for good (*dhanyaceṣṭa*), I am blessed (*dhanyavān*). Let me be happy by this *Dhanyavrata*".

12. Thus saying make the gift of the image with money to the Brahmin. The result is that one becomes highly satisfied without actual enjoyment or suffering in the world.

13. It is quite certain that by this vrata alone, one attains in this life abundant happiness, wealth and grain (food).

14. The fire (in the vrata) burns away all sins in the former lives and, as a result, brings about liberation.

15. He who listens to this and he who recites it with devotion, both become highly blessed.

16. It is said that long long ago, this was performed by Dhanada who was born to a Śūdra woman.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Kāntivrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about the important Kāntivrata by performing which the Moon regained his lost resplendence.

2. It is well known that the Moon was attacked by consump-

tion due to the curse of Dakṣa and that he regained his lustre by performing this vrata.

3. O king, on the Dvitīyā tithi in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, spend the whole night by worshipping Viṣṇu as Bala-Keśava.

4. The feet should be worshipped as Baladeva and the head as Keśava.

5. After worshipping Viṣṇu in this form, an image of the moon of two digits (in gold) should be worshipped with *arghya* etc., and with the (prescribed) mantras.

6. "I bow to the great soul Soma, the overlord of the world of sacrifice, the holder of amṛta and the great ordainer". (This should be uttered).

7. In the night should be eaten cooked barley with ghee.

8. For the four months from Phālguna milky food should be taken and in Kārttika homa with barley should be conducted.

9. During the four months from Āṣāḍha homa with sesamum should be performed, and only sesamum food should be taken.

10. At the end of one year, the golden image of the moon covered in a pair of white clothes and decorated with white flowers should be gifted to a Brahmin.

11-12. At the end of the year, a silver image[1] of the moon covered in a pair of white clothes and decorated with white flowers may also be given to a Brahmin after similarly honouring him.

13. "O Nārāyaṇa in the form of Soma, by your grace, one becomes lustrous, learned and lovely; I bow to you". (This should then be uttered).

14. By making the gift to the Brahmin with this mantra, a man becomes resplendent.

15. In days of yore, this vrata was performed by Soma himself and Viṣṇu was very much pleased by it.

16. And he rid him of his consumption and gave him the digit called 'Amṛta'. This digit was acquired by Soma at night.

17. He regained his full form and became the king of the stars. On the Dvitīyā day the Aśvinīdevas should be acclaimed as Soma-eaters. They are known as Śeṣa and Viṣṇu.

1. The silver image seems to be an alternative for the golden image for those who cannot afford to give it.

18. O king, there is no god other than Viṣṇu. All the other gods are himself in different names.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Saubhāgyavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about Saubhāgyavrata by performing which prosperity accrues to man and woman alike.

2. On Tṛtīyā tithi in the bright half of the month of phālguna one should perform this vrata with purity of body and mind in the night.

3-4. He should worship Hari with Lakṣmī or Rudra with Umā. Lakṣmī is identical with Umā and Hari is identical with Rudra. It is so declared in all Śāstras and Purāṇas.

Any Śāstra or Kāvya which states otherwise is not worthy of its name.

5-6. Viṣṇu should be considered as Rudra and Lakṣmī as Gaurī. He who speaks of difference between them is lowly (Adhama) and should be considered an atheist outside the field of dharma.

7. Knowing this well, Hari together with his consort should be duly worshipped with the prescribed mantras.

8. The feet should be worshipped as Gambhīra, the waist as Subhaga, the belly as Devadeva, and face as Trinetra (three-eyed), the head as Vācaspati and the entire body as Rudra.

9-10. Worshipping thus with sandal, flowers etc., either Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī or Śiva with Gaurī, homa should be performed in front with honey, ghee and sesamum in the name of Saubhāgyapati (lord of prosperity).

11. Cooked wheat should be taken on the floor and without oil and caustic elements.

In the dark half of the month also, the observance is the same.

12. In the months of Āṣāḍha etc., the fast should be broken with barley food, and in Kārttika etc., with food made by Śyāmāka grain.

13-14. Then on Tṛtīyā tithi in the bright half of the month of Māgha a golden image of Rudra and Gaurī or of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī should be made according to means.

15-16. The image should be given to a deserving Brahmin who is a good Vedic scholar but without means for food or one who closely observes the precepts. It will be better if the recipient is a devotee of Viṣṇu.

17-18. It will be particularly meritorious if six vessels are given to the Brahmin containing honey, ghee, sesamum oil, molasses, salt and cow's milk one in each.

19. By observing this, prosperity and beauty in seven lives are gained, be the performer man or woman.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Avighnavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about the Vighnahara (Avighna) Vrata by which, O king, obstacles are warded off.

2. This vrata should be performed on Caturthī tithi in the month of Phālguna. Food should be taken only at night and it should be of rice mixed with sesamum.

3. The homa also should be of the same material (sesamum), so too the gift to the Brahmin.

4. This should be done for four months and in the fifth a golden image of Gaṇeśa should be worshipped and gifted to a Brahmin together with milky food in five vessels and sesamum.

5. All obstacles can be got over by performing this vrata.

6. When Sagara faced impediments while performing Aśvamedha sacrifice, he got them removed by this vrata.

7. When Rudra was destroying Tripura, he did the same to accomplish his aim. And I too did the same while drinking the ocean.

8. This was done by many kings and by those that seek penance or knowledge, to remove obstructions.

9. Pūjā (worship) should be performed to Gaṇeśa (invoking him as) Śūra, Dhīra, Gajānana, Lambodara and Ekadaṁṣṭra, and homa also should be done to keep off obstacles.

10. By doing this all obstacles vanish, and by gifting the image of Vināyaka, one attains great gratification.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Śāntivrata

Agastya said:

1. O king, I shall now tell you about Śāntivrata by performing which all householders get peace of mind—Bliss. Listen.

2. It should be performed on Pañcamī tithi of the bright half (starting from) the month of Kārttika. During the year hot things should be avoided in food.

3-4. In the night Viṣṇu should be worshipped in his form reposing Śeṣa. The feet should be worshipped as Ananta, the waist as Vāsuki, the belly as Takṣaka, the chest as Kārkoṭaka, the neck as Padma, the hands as Mahāpadma, the face as Śaṅkhapāla and the head as Kuṭila.

5. Worshipping (the great serpents) as contained in Viṣṇu, pūjā may be offered to them separately also.

6. With them in mind, Viṣṇu should be bathed with milk, and then homa should be performed with milk and sesamum.

7. At the end of the year, Brahmins should be fed and a golden image of a serpent should be gifted to one of them.

8. O king, he who observes this vrata with a devoted mind, will certainly get full peace of mind and freedom from the fear of snakes.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Kāmavrata

Agastya said:

1-2. O king, listen to me. I shall tell you now about Kāmavrata by which whatever pleasure is desired is obtained by anyone who performs it on the Ṣaṣṭhī day eating only fruit.

3-4. On Pañcamī day in the bright half of the month of Pauṣa one should take meal, but on Ṣaṣṭhī only fruit and afterwards silently pure rice in the company of other Brahmins. Or (even on that day) he may take fruit alone and on the Saptamī day have (the usual) meal.

5. Homa also should be performed after worshipping Viṣṇu as Guha (Skanda) in the prescribed manner. This should be done for one year.

6. The worship of Viṣṇu should be in his names as Ṣaḍvaktra (six-faced), Kārttikeya (son of Kṛttikā), Senānī (commander), Kumāra and Skanda.

7. At the close of the vrata, Brahmins should be fed and a golden image of Skanda should be gifted to one of them, saying.

8. "O lord Kumāra, may all my wishes be accomplished by your mercy due to my devotion. O Brahmin, receive it soon".

9. When this (image) is given to the Brahmin along with the clothes the desires of the worshipper begin to get fulfilled in this life itself.

10. A sonless man gets a son, a needy man gets money, the deposed king regains kingdom. There need be no doubt in this matter.

11. In days of yore, this vrata was performed by Nala when he was living (in servitude) in Ṛtuparṇa's capital.

12. Similarly by several other deposed kings was this vrata observed to succeed (in regaining kingdom).

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Ārogyavrata

Agastya said:

1. Now I shall tell you about another vrata called 'Ārogya-vrata which removes sins of every kind.

2. This vrata is to be observed by performing worship (to the Sun-god) in the names of Āditya, Bhāskara, Ravi, Bhānu, Sūrya, Divākara and Prabhākara.

3. The rule is that on the Ṣaṣṭhī day food may be taken; on Saptamī day the sun should be worshipped (without food) and on the Aṣṭamī day food may again be taken.

4. One who performs this worship of the Sun duly for one full year, gets health, wealth and grain in this life, and gets in the other world a place from where he need not return.

5-6. In days of yore, the glorious and valiant king by name Anaraṇya propitiated the god by this Vrata, as a result of which the god was pleased and he bestowed upon him sound health.

Bhadrāśva said:

7. Was that king sickly that he is spoken of as getting healthy ? O sage, how did he happen to get the disease ?

Agastya said:

8. The king was, no doubt, glorious, famous, handsome, mighty and healthy.

9. But once he happened to go to the Mānasa lake frequented by hosts of gods. He saw there in the middle of the lake a big white lotus.

10. And within that an effulgent man of the size of the thumb, two-armed and clad in red silk.

11-12. Seeing him, he called his charioteer and spoke to him: "Bring that lotus to me. Wearing this on my head before the whole world, I shall become highly praiseworthy. So bring it quickly". Told thus, the charioteer entered the lake.

13. He went near it in order to catch it. But the moment he touched the lotus, a boom emanated from it and, terrified by that sound, he fell down dead.

14. By the impact of that sound, the king lost his complexion, might and prowess and became a leper.

15. Seeing the transformation of that kind, the king was grief-stricken and began to think about how it happened.

16-17. When he was pondering thus, sage Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, came there and asked him: "O king, how has your body become afflicted in this way? Tell me what I may do for you".

18. Asked thus by Vasiṣṭha, the king told him about the lotus and all that happened.

19. After hearing that, the sage said: "O king, you are lucky. But you are also unlucky and hence you have become a leper".

20-21. Told thus, the king shivering with fear and with folded hands, asked him: "O sage, I am righteous, how could I be otherwise"? Be pleased to tell me the cause of my leprosy."

Vasiṣṭha said:

22. "This lotus is called 'Brahmapadma' and it is well known over the three worlds. Its very sight is equivalent to the sight of all gods.

23. Somewhere in this lake, it will be seen for six months. On seeing it, he who enters water gets cleansed of all sins and attains supreme beatitude.

24. This is the form of Brahman in the originating stage. Seeing this and then plunging in water, brings about liberation.

25. O king, your charioteer saw this and was immersed in water. But you came here to catch hold of it and so you have committed a sin and, as a result, become a leper.

26-27. Since you were able to see this (lotus) I said you are lucky. But since you became stupefied (so as to attempt at plucking it) I said you are unlucky".

28. Saying thus to the king, Vasiṣṭha disappeared.

29. The king, grasping what Vasiṣṭha had said, came there every day and saw the lord (in the lotus) (and got cured of the disease).

30. The gods too call it the golden lotus. Seeing the Brahmapadma with Hari within it in the Mānasa lake, one attains the supreme Brahman from where he does not return.

31. O king, there is another reason also for your becoming leprous. The sun remains within this lotus.

32-33. He is really the eternal Supreme self. You thought of wearing that on the head thinking you would become famous thereby and so sent the charioteer to fetch it. That very moment you became afflicted by leprosy.

34. Therefore, O king, you also perform this vrata and by its power you will be cured of leprosy.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Putraprāptivrata

Agastya said:

1. O king, now listen to the brief account of the Putraprāptivrata. I am going to give you.

2. This Putraprāptivrata (the vow for getting a son) is to be performed fasting on the Aṣṭamī tithi in the dark half of the month of Bhādrapada.

3. The *Saṅkalpa* should be made on the Saptamī day and the worship to Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa lying in Devakī's lap surrounded by the mothers, should be conducted on Aṣṭamī.

4. On the Aṣṭamī day, early in the morning, Viṣṇu should be worshipped with full concentration of mind.

5. Then homa should be performed with barley, black sesamum, ghee and curd. Brahmans should be fed and given dakṣiṇā.

6. Then the performer of vrata may take food, first Bilva leaves, and then with oils and other items.

7. Doing in this way on the Kṛṣṇapakṣa Aṣṭamī every month, an issueless person begets children.

8-10. It is known that in ancient times the valiant king Śūrasena who was issueless, performed penance in the Himālayas, and the Lord himself told him about this vrata, and accord-

ingly he performed it and got a son Vasudeva by name who later on performed many sacrifices. And the saintly king (Śūrasena) gained salvation.

11. Thus, O king, I have told you about Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī. (In this Vrata), at the end of the year, a pair of cows should be gifted to a Brahmin.

12. Such is the Putravrata narrated to you. By performing it one gets freed from all sins.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Śauryavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about another vrata called Śauryavrata (the vow for valour) by which even a timid man becomes valiant all of a sudden.

2. On the Navamī day in the month of Āśvayuja one should undertake absolute fasting. Taking the *saṅkalpa* on the Saptamī day and remaining without food on Aṣṭamī, on the Navamī day flour should be taken first in all reverence.

3. Feeding the Brahmins, goddess Durgā who is Mahāmāyā, Mahābhāgā and Mahāprabhā should be worshipped.

4-5. Observing in this way for one whole year, at the end of the vrata, young girls should be fed, and, according to means, given golden garments. The goddess should then be implored saying, "May the goddess be pleased with me".

6. By performing thus, a deposed king gets back his kingdom, the ignorant man gets knowledge and the fear-stricken man gets valour.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Sārvabhaumavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you briefly about the Sārvabhaumavrata (vow for emperorship) by performing which properly, a king can become an emperor.

2-4. On the Daśamī tithī in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, one should take food only in the night and offer pure *bali* to the different quarters with flowers of various kinds, after offering worship to Brahmins, and pray with devotion to the quarters saying, "May you all be favourable to me in life after life". So saying *bali* should be offered to them with pure mind.

5. Food should not be taken in the night, but well-cooked food with curd may be taken before and after.

6. He who performs so, for one year, gains victory in different quarters.

7. If he performs this in the prescribed manner without food starting from Ekādaśī in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa and continues for one year, Kubera gets pleased and grants abundant wealth.

8. It is a great vrata relating to Viṣṇu if on Ekādaśī, whether in the bright half or dark half of the month, one fasts and takes food on Dvādaśī day.

9. Such observance destroys even great sins.

10. Then there is Dharmavrata, which should be started in the night of Trayodaśī in the bright half of the month Phālguna. It is Raudravrata starting in Caturdaśī in the dark half, from the month of Māgha and continuing for one year.

11. It is Pitṛvrata when it is performed on the Amāvāsyā day. All these have been now told to you.

12. If one continues these vratas for fifteen years, one gets reward according to their intensity.

13. O king, performing them according to the prescribed rules, is equivalent to performing thousands of Aśvamedha and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices.

14-15. Even a single vrata is capable of destroying all sins. A king who performs all of them gets the whole universe under his control and finally attains the celestial region called Virāja.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Nāradiya Pañcarātra

Bhadrāśva said:

1. I am eager to know whatever wonder you have seen or heard. Please tell me.

Agastya said:

2. Lord Janārdana is himself of the nature of wonder. The wonders I have seen about him are many and varied.

3. O king, when sage Nārada once went to Śvetadvīpa he saw there many effulgent men bearing the conch, disc and lotus.

4. Seeing them he began to ponder over as to who was Lord Viṣṇu among them.

5. He was unable to know who was the Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) with conch, disc and mace, to whom he could offer worship.

6. Baffled thus, he began to meditate on lord Kṛṣṇa, the great Nārāyaṇa.

7. By this meditation for a thousand divine years, the lord became pleased with him.

8. He appeared before him and asked him what boon He could give him.

Nārada said:

9. I have meditated on you for a thousand years. If you are pleased with me, tell me how I may attain you.

The great lord said:

10. O sage, those who perform sacrifice with Puruṣasūkta and those who learn the Vedic Texts attain me.

11. In the absence of Vedas and Śāstras, those who do sacrifice in the manner ordained in the Pāñcarātra attain me.

12. The Pāñcarātra is for Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas For Śūdras and others what is laid down is going to the temple and utterance of my names but not my worship.

13-14. O sage, I declared this in the most ancient times for the multitude. Any one who follows it and becomes my devotee,

will retain this in his mind when the fruits of his actions disappear.

15. Others who are engulfed by the feelings caused by Rajas and Tamas, become indifferent towards me.

16. In Kṛta, Tretā and Dvāpara yugas, those with the *sattva* element (predominating) reach me, but in Kali people have a preponderance of Rajas and Tamas.

17-18. Listen to me Nārada, now, I give you another boon. This rare Pañcarātra doctrine of mine will fully dawn upon you by my blessing. You need have no doubt in this matter.

19. I can be attained through the Vedas, Pāñcarātra, Bhakti and Yajña, but not by anything else even if resorted to for crores of years.

20. Telling this to Nārada, the great lord disappeared, and Nārada too went to heaven.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Wonder of Viṣṇu

Bhadrāśva said:

1. Who are the two women in this world, one black and the other white, and who is both black and white ?

2. Who is this pure person, who became sevenfold ? Who is the lord who is twelve-fold and who has two bodies and six heads?

3. How was conjugal unity brought about through the rising sun? How was this world expanded?

Agastya said:

4. The white woman and the black woman are sisters. The woman who is of the dual colour, black and white, is the night.

5. The person who being one became sevenfold, is the ocean which is seven in number.

6. He who is twelve-fold and has two bodies and six heads is the year and the two bodies are the two movements (northward and southward), the six faces are the six seasons and thus the person is verily the year.

7. The conjugal unity is the day and night brought about by the sun and the moon, and from this dual god arose the propagation of the world.

8-9. O king, Viṣṇu should be considered the Supreme God. One who does not do the rites ordained by the Vedas, can never see him.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

Yugadharma

Bhadrāśva said:

1. How should this great lord, the omnipresent Supreme Soul, be known in four yugas?

2. What are the practices to be observed in each yuga by the castes? How can a Brahmin who contacts a woman not his own, can get himself purified?

Agastya said:

3. In the Kṛtayuga the earth becomes connected with Devas by Vedic rituals. In the Tretāyuga the same is accomplished through sacrifices.

4. In the Dvāparayuga by the mingling of Sattva and Rajas, the king reigns according to the extent of his righteousness. In Kaliyuga Tamas predominates.

5-6. In the Kali age Brahmins stray from the path of righteousness and the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras become mostly lowcastes without truth and purity. Then the world gets spoiled and the dharma of the castes begins to disappear.

Bhadrāśva said:

7. How can a Brahmin, Kṣatriya, (Vaiśya) and Śūdra purify himself if he happened to have sexual connection with a prohibited women. Is such a connection tolerated at all?

Agastya said:

8. A Brahmin can cohabit with (women of all) the four

(castes), a Kṣatriya with three (avoiding Brahmin), a Vaiśya with two (avoiding Brahmin and Kṣatriya) and Śūdra with his own (only).

9. To the Kṣatriya the Brahmin woman is prohibited, to the Vaiśya the Brahmin and Kṣatriya women are prohibited and to the Śūdra all these three.

10. Manu has declared that to a man in the lower caste a woman of the higher caste is prohibited; so too the mother, mother's sister, mother-in-law and brother's wife.

11. To one in the lower caste, a woman in the higher caste is fully excluded; so too the daughter-in-law, daughter, the frend's wife and grand-daughters.

12-13. The women of the washerman class and similar others are also of the prohibited category. Cohabiting with a woman of the prohibited category produces great sin.

14. The atonement for a Brahmin for such prohibited cohabitation is *prāṇāyāma* (control of breath in the prescribed form) for a hundred times.

15-16. The sin acquired by a Brahmin by prohibited association with the woman of a different caste, even during a long time, disappears by reciting the *Gāyatrī mantra* with *praṇava* ten times and by *prāṇāyāma* three hundred times. Even the sin of killing a Brahmin (disappears by such a practice), then should we say about the other (less grave) sins?

17. It may also be noted that the Brahmin who is able to realise the Supreme god by meditation and worship is no touched by sin.

18. The learner of the Vedas is not affected even if he happens to commit numerous sins.

19. By meditating on Viṣṇu, learning the Vedas, giving gifts and performing sacrifices for Hari, a Brahmin always remains pure and gets over all obstacles.

20. I have thus told you all that you asked me about. I have briefly stated what has been said by Manu and others in detail.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Wonder of Nārāyaṇa

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O Sage, be pleased to tell me what happened to you in your body that you are long-lived.

Agastya said:

2. O king, this body of mine is associated with many interesting things. It is purified by Vedic knowledge and it wil remain for numerous kalpas.

3. Wandering over the whole world, O king, I once went to the great land Ilāvṛta near mount Meru.

4. There I saw a beautiful lake, near it a great hermitage and within it a frail sage performing penance.

5. Seeing him who was reduced to a skeleton and was wearing torn bark garment, I was wondering who he was.

6. In order to gain his confidence, I exclaimed: "O sage, I have come to you, please give me something".

7. The sage said: "Welcome to you, O great Brahmin, please remain here. I shall show hospitality to you".

8. At these words of his, I entered the hermitage and saw the sage glowing with lustre.

9. Seeing me standing on the floor, the sage hummed and immediately there arose splitting the earth five virgins.

10. One of them took a golden seat and offered it to me. Another held water in her hand and a third began to wash my feet with it.

11. Two others holding fans stood on my sides. The sage again hummed.

12. As a result, a large golden canoe appeared in that lake beautifully floating.

13. In that canoe were hundreds of virgins holding golden pots. Seeing them the sage told me:

14. "O Brahmin, all this is for your bath. Please enter the canoe and have your bath".

15. Then I entered that canoe, but soon the canoe sank into the lake.

16. When I was thus immersed in water, I saw that place, that sage and myself at the top of mount Meru.

17. O king, I then saw the seven oceans, the seven principal mountains, and the seven islands constituting the earth.

18. Even now I remain thinking of that glorious world and how and when I could get there (again).

19. I have now satisfied your curiosity regarding the great lord and what happened to my person. What else do you wish to ask ?

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Rudragitā I

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O sage, what Vrata, Tapas or Dharma was done by you to get at that world again?

Agastya said:

2. No one can think of getting at those worlds without worshipping Viṣṇu with devotion. When once he is worshipped, all of them are easily attainable.

3. Thinking, thus, O king, the eternal Viṣṇu was worshipped by me with sacrifices in which dakṣiṇā was liberally given.

4. As I was worshipping him in his form as sacrifice for a long time, Devas who were invoked in the sacrifice came there together with Indra.

5-6. When Indra and the other gods were remaining in their positions in the sky, the great god Rudra arrived there. He too stood in his position.

7-9. Seeing all the gods, sages and great serpents arrive there, the sage Sanatkumāra, son of Brahmā, came there in a very minute aerial car resembling the sun and he, a great yogi who could know the past, present and future, prostrated before Rudra.

10-11. At the sight of these Devas, sages like Nārada, and Sanatkumāra and Rudra, I asked who among them was the

greatest to whom sacrifices could be offered. Then in the presence of gods, Rudra told me:

Rudra said:

12. Listen to me all of you Devas, Devarṣis, Brahmarṣis, and you intelligent Agastya in particular.

13-14. He for whom sacrifices are to be performed is the great and omnipresent lord Nārāyaṇa from whom the entire universe has arisen and in whom it is dissolved along with Devas.

15-16. That great lord put himself to a three-fold transformation. With Sattva predominating in him, he associated himself with Rajas and Tamas, and created out of his navel Brahmā seated in the lotus. Brahmā associated himself with Rajas and Tamas and created me.

17-18. Lord Hari is Sattva and he is the ultimate. Brahmā, the four-faced god, who arose from the lotus is Sattva and Rajas. That which is with Rajas and Tamas is no doubt, myself.

19. There is the trio constituted of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattva is of the nature of Nārāyaṇa and all living beings are liberated by it.

20. By Rajas associated with Sattva arises this creation which has got Rajas predominating. This is well known as the creation of Brahmā.

21. The actions not laid down in the Vedas but are, however, based on Śāstras, are called Raudra (pertaining to Rudra) and that is not commended for people.

22. Actions not out of Rajas, but purely out of Tamas, lead people to ruin both in the present world and in the world beyond.

23. Sattva pertains to Nārāyaṇa and living beings have Sattva as the means of liberation, and Nārāyaṇa is considered as of the nature of sacrifice.

24. In the Kṛtayuga, Nārāyaṇa is worshipped in his pure and minute form. In the Tretāyuga he is worshipped in the form of sacrifice and in the Dvāpara yuga according to Pāñcarātra.

25. In the Kaliyuga he is worshipped in the manner laid down by me in various Tāmasic forms and with the motive of animosity.

26. There is no god above him in the past, present or future.

He who is Viṣṇu is Brahmā and he who is Brahmā is Maheśvara too.

27. Men who are learned in the three Vedas and adepts in sacrifices have declared that he who draws a distinction among us three, is sinful and wicked and faces downfall.

28. O Agastya, listen. I shall tell you about the early times when people were not having devotion to Hari.

29-30. In olden times, the people of the Bhūloka (Earth) performed sacrifice to Janārdana, and went to the Bhuvarloka, and from there worshipped Him and attained heaven being liberated in the gradual manner.

31. (Even) after being thus liberated, everyone began to meditate on Hari, and He being present everywhere, appeared before them.

32. He asked them all as to what he might do for them. They then bowed to him and said:

33. "O great god, all people have been now liberated. How then will creation proceed and who will go to hell?"

34. Thus asked by Devas, lord Janārdana told them: "During the (first) three yugas, most people reach me.

35. But in the last yuga (Kali) those who attain me will be few. I then create the force of stupefaction which deludes people.

36. O you Rudra, you produce the Mohaśāstra (the science of stupefaction). With a little effort you produce delusion".

37. So saying, the great lord concealed himself and I was made very manifest.

38. From then onwards people became more interested in the śāstras which I promulgated.

39. Following the Vedic path, (worshipping) lord Nārāyaṇa and finding unity (in all the three gods), people get liberation.

40. Those who consider me as different from Viṣṇu or Brahmā, are driven to do sinful deeds and reach hell.

41. It is for the delusion of those who are outside the Vedic fold that I introduced the śāstra called Naya, Siddhānta etc.

42. This is the rope (Pāśa) that binds men (Paśu) and that should be snapped. Therefore, it is the Pāśupata śāstra which is Vaidik.

43. O sage, my body is of the Vedas. This truth is not known by those who propound other śāstras.

44. I am to be known through the Vedas and particularly by the Brahmins. I am the three yugas and also Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

45. I am the three guṇas Sattva, (Rajas and Tamas), the three Vedas and the three fires, and three worlds, the three Sandhyās[1] and the three Varṇas.[2]

46. I am the three *savanas*[3], the three bonds in the world.

47. He who knows this and also knows me as Nārāyaṇa, the lotus-born Brahmā and myself as one made different by the qualities (has right knowledge). I am essentially one, it is ignorance that produces the sense of difference.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Rudragītā II

Agastya said:

1. Said thus by Rudra, all the gods and sages bowed to him; I too did the same.

2. After bowing thus, when I looked at him, I saw in his body Brahmā.

3. I also saw in his heart lord Nārāyaṇa in an extremely minute form glowing like the Sun.

4. Seeing this all the sacrificing sages were wonder-struck and hailed him uttering the Sāma, Ṛk and Yajurvedas.

5. Then they asked Parameśvara (Rudra) how in one and the same god all the three gods are seen.

Rudra said:

6. O learned men, whatever is offered in the sacrifice for me, is shared by all the three of us.

---

1. Morn, noon and evening.
2. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya
3. Vedic rites to be performed in the morning, noon and evening.

7. O great sages, there is no diversity among us, and discerning people do not find any such thing".

8. Thus said by Rudra, O king, all the sages asked him about the purpose of Mohaśāstra (which deludes people).

The sages said:

9. You have produced a separate śāstra to stupefy the world. Be pleased to tell us why you have done this.

Rudra said:

10. There is in Bhāratavarṣa a forest called Daṇḍaka. There a Brahmin named Gautama was performing severe penance.

11. Brahmā was very much pleased at this, and he asked the ascetic to seek a boon from him.

12. Thus asked by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, he requested, "Give me abundance of crops and grain". And Brahmā granted it.

13-14. Getting this boon, the ascetic built a large hermitage at Śataśṛṅga and there he used to reap every morning the ripe grain and cook it at noon and offer sumptuous food to Brahmins.

15. He was doing this for a long time, but once a severe drought occurred which lasted for twelve years.

16. Distressed at this drought and very much famished, all the sages in the forest went to Gautama.

17. Seeing them all in his hermitage, Gautama bowed to them and asked them to stay there.

18. They remained there eating a variety of food till the drought was over.

10. Then those sages felt a desire to undertake a pilgrimage.

20. Knowing this the great sage Mārīca spoke to the sage Śāṇḍilya.

Mārīca said:

21. "O Śāṇḍilya, I say for your good that sage Gautama is like your father. Without telling him we should not leave here for penance".

22. When told thus, the sages laughed and said, "Have we sold ourselves to him by taking his food"?

23. Again they spoke of leaving the place. They also created a magical cow and left it at the hermitage.

24. Seeing that cow wandering in the hermitage, Gautama took some water in his hand and splashed it on its body (to drive it out).

25. Then that magical cow fell down like a drop of water.

26. Seeing it thus hurt, he turned to the sages starting to leave and asked them with reverence:

27. "O Brahmins, please tell me why you are going leaving me, your devotee".

The sages said:

28. "O sage, so long as the sin of killing the cow remains in you, we shall not eat your food".

29. Told thus, Gautama who knew what was righteous, asked them to tell him what was the atonement for the sin of having killed the cow.

The sages said:

30. "This cow is not dead but has only become unconscious. Bathed in the water of Gaṅgā, it will doubtless rise up.

31. The atonement is only with regard to one that is killed. So penance may be performed. Please don't be angry". So saying they all left.

32. When they were gone, Gautama went to the great mount Himālaya to perform severe penance.

33. For one hundred and one years I was worshipped, and, being pleased by that, I asked him to seek a boon.

34. He sought me the river Gaṅgā in my matted hair to be made to follow him.

35. I then let off the river from one part of my head and Gautama led it to the place where the cow was lying.

36. Washed by that water the cow rose up, and the river became great with holy water and sacred spots.

37. Seeing that great wonder, the seven sages came there in aerial cars saying "Well done, well done.

38. Blessed you are O Gautama, who is there equal to you in that you have brought this Gaṅgā to this Daṇḍaka (forest)".

39. Then Gautama was wondering as to how he became the cause for hurting the animal.

40. He realised then that it was all the result of the magic adopted by the sages (who were living in his hermitage) and cursed them who were sages only in appearance.

41. "You will all be outside the three Vedas and ineligible to perform Vedic acts".

42. Hearing the curse of Gautama thus pronounced on those sages, the Seven Sages told him: "Although your words will have due effect, you should not mean it for all time.

43. In the Kali age let these Brahmins become such as to be ungrateful to those who do them good.

44. But, burnt by the fire of the woods of your curse, let them in the Kali age become devotees.

45. But let them he outside the fold of Vedic rites. Let this river also have the secondary name Godāvarī.

46. In Kaliyuga those who come to this river and give gifts of cows and other materials according to their capacity, will delight themselves with the gods.

47-48. If at the time when Jupiter is in Leo one takes bath there and propitiates the manes according to the rules, they will go to heaven even if they have fallen in hell, and those who are already in heaven will get final release.

49. You will attain great fame and gain eternal liberation".

50. Then the seven sages went to Kailāśa where I was with Pārvatī and told me:

51. "In the Kali age many will have your form with crown of matted hair assuming by themselves ghostly forms and wearing liṅgas.

52. For their sake, give a śāstra to all these people under the influence of Kali".

53. Requested by them thus, I produced a Saṁhitā which contained rules for Vedic rites as well.

54. This Saṁhitā was named Niśśvāsa, and Bābhravya and Śaṇḍila were absorbed in it.

55. Deluded by me, people out of selfish motives, will promulgate their own śāstras in Kaliyuga.

56. The *Niśśvāsasaṁhitā* with a lakh of verses alone is authoritative and that gives the discipline regarding Pāśupata.

57. This follows the path of the Vedas, and whatever is outside its scope should be considered as impure.

58. The Vedāntins in Kaliyuga resort to Rudra. Fickle-minded people frame their own śāstras, but I don't remain with them.

59-60. In yore, I assumed the fierce Bhairava form for the sake of the gods and for the annihilation of the wicked demons and laughted terribly.

61. Out of my tears which fell then on the earth, arose innumerable terrific beings.

62. They were fond of flesh and wine and women and were out to create terror in the world.

63. The Brahmins cursed by Gautama will be born in their clan. Among them those who follow the rules I have laid down and are of good conduct, will attain heaven and get liberation.

64. Those who doubt the doctrine I have laid down, ridicule my followers and go to hell.

65. Formerly burnt by the fire of Gautama and now by my words they go to hell and we need not doubt this.

Rudra continued:

66. Told thus by me, the sons of Brahmā (the seven sages) went away. Gautama too returned to his abode.

67. I have thus told you what Dharma is. He who is averse to this naturally is prone to do only wicked things.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Determination of Prakṛti and Puruṣa[1]

Varāha said:

1. Agastya asked the omniscient Rudra; "Who is the most ancient one and the creator of everything?"

Agastya said:

2. Yourself, Brahmā and Viṣṇu constitute a trio and the three Vedas. Like the flame of the lamp (you illumine everything) and permeate all śāstras.

1. Actually the chapter deals with the identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

3. O god, tell me at which time are you Rudra, at which time Brahmā and at which time Viṣṇu.

Rudra said:

4. Viṣṇu is the Supreme Brahman and in Vedas and śāstras he is spoken of as having three forms. But this is not known to the ignorant.

5. From the root *viś* meaning 'to enter' with the Nominative singular suffix we get the word 'Viṣṇu'. He is the eternal and the supreme among all gods.

6. This Viṣṇu who is spoken of as having a tenfold form as well as of a single form is the Āditya with all yogic powers.

7. The great god for the sake of Devas assumes human form in every yuga and praises me.

8. For the sake of the world as well as gods, I worship these two forms of the lord (divine as well as human) in the Śvetadvīpa (white island) in Kṛtayuga.

9. At the time of creation, I extol the fourfaced (Brahmā) and become time. And in that Kṛtayuga, Brahmā, Devas and Asuras extol me always.

10. People who seek pleasures sacrifice to me in my form as liṅga (phallus), and those who seek liberation sacrifice to me mentally in my form as the thousand-headed. It is to this form that the universal god Nārāyaṇa himself offers sacrifice.

11. Those who perform Brahmayajña daily propitiate Brahmā, because the Veda is Brahmā.

12. The Supreme Brahman is enshrined in the names Nārāyaṇa, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara and Puruṣottama.

13. For those who perform Vedic rituals, we Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are the spirits of the mantras. There need be no doubt in this matter.

14. I am Viṣṇu as well Brahmā with the eternal Vedas. The three (gods) are really one and the wise men should not consider them as different.

15. He who considers otherwise is a sinner and he goes to the terrible hell.

16. I am Brahmā and Viṣṇu and the Vedas Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman. The difference is only in this manner.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

Vairājavṛtta

Rudra said:

1. O great Brahmin, listen to another interesting wonder.

2. I was created by Brahmā and ordered to create beings, but being unable to do it, I immersed myself in water.

3-4. There, while for a moment I was fully absorbed in contemplating on the great lord in the size of the thumb, there arose from the water eleven persons blazing like fire at the time of deluge and heating the water with their radiance.

5. I asked them who they were thus come out of the water and imparting to it much heat and where they were going.

6. Though asked thus, those great beings didnot speak anything, but simply went away.

7. Then came an effulgent person cloud-like in complexion and with eyes like the lotus.

8. I asked him who he was and who the other persons were and also the purpose with which they came.

The man said:

9. The effulgent persons who came out here and went away are Ādityas who appeared at the meditation of Brahmā.

10. Brahmā performs creation and they are for the protection of the created.

Śambhu (Rudra) said:

11. "Please tell me, O lord, how I can know this great Person".

12-13. Asked thus by Rudra, the Man replied: "I am the eternal lord Nārāyaṇa reposing in water. You are given a divine eye, and see me with that carefully".

14. Told thus, when I looked at him, I found him to be the same as the lord of the size of the thumb (whom) I was meditating on) with a lotus in his navel.

15. I saw Brahmā (in that lotus) and myself near him. Seeing that great Being I was full of pleasure.

16-17. O great Brahmin, I had then an urge to extol him, and I accordingly praised that Universal Soul with the following hymn.

Rudra said:

18. I bow to that eternal being, the pure soul, with numerous forms and thousand hands, the foremost among the effulgent, extensive in body and pure in action.

19. I bow to that great Śambhu, resplendent like a thousand suns and blazing like the fire, the remover of all ills of the world, the holder of all knowledge, the bearer of the disc, and praised by all Devas.

20. I bow to you always, the originless and eternal, reposing on the serpent Śeṣa, great lord, lord of all beings, the chief of Maruts, the master of all, the lord of the world, the master of the entire universe.

21-22. O Nārāyaṇa, lord of water, the bestower of good to the whole world, lord of the universe, the universal eye, the moon, the sun, the eternal, with form to be inferred, the embodiment of ambrosia, the eternal, with effulgence excelling fire, the omnipresent, protect me always who have sought refuge in you, O remover of the perils of Devas.

23. I see your innumerable faces and in their midst Brahmā, the creator of the worlds. I bow to you, O my grandfather.

24. O the first and great god, you are resorted to by those with mind purified by following the path of knowledge after numerous births in the cycle of saṁsāra. I bow to you.

25. He who understands you to be the one beyond Prakṛti (Matter), is not subject to the activity of the Guṇas (the three qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and realises you in the extensive as well as the minute aspects.

26. You are the root of speech, but you are without organs. You are without action, but you have not given up action. You are not one in Saṁsāra, but you have a body of pure abstracts.

27. You in your four-armed form are known by those who perform sacrifices, but it is a matter for wonder that your supreme form is not known even by Devas.

28. Therefore, gods like Brahmā contemplate on your avatāras. Even Brahmā does not know your ultimate form.

29. But I, having been purified by penance, am able to know you, the most ancient. And my father Brahmā has become known to many Purāṇas.

30. Even those like me cannot know you except through

penance. But you, who cannot be known even by those like Brahmā, can be known by continuous meditation on you.

31. Those who know the Vedas gain superior mental power through your grace and they alone know you.

32. To him who has realised you, manhood or godhood is not delectable. You are of universal form. You are minute as well as big.

33. You are expensive as well as minute. O God, still you are quite attainable. Those who keep out from you fall in hell. When you, the lord, are there, why speak of Vasus, Ādityas, Maruts and Bhūmi ?

34. My praises are all for you who are extensive and supreme soul, and so, O eternal one, be pleased to accept them from me, a sta unch devotee.

35. O Viṣṇu, give me omniscience when you command me to perform creation.

36. Four-faced (Brahmā) or crore-faced, only he who is pure of mind will be able to narrate your countless qualities.

37. He who with pure mind contemplates on you unswervingly, in his mind you remain. I bow to you.

38. O lord, this hymn thus came out of my mind. Be pleased to purify me, fear-stricken by the course of saṁsāra.

Varāha said:

39. Thus praised by the great Rudra, Lord Viṣṇu was pleased and spoke in a voice majestic like thunder.

Viṣṇu said:

40. O God, husband of Umā, everything is well for you. Please seek a boon. There is no difference between us. We are one and the same.

Rudra said:

41. I am engaged by Brahmā, O lord, to perform creation. Give me for that the threefold knowledge required.

Viṣṇu said:

42. "You are the abode of all knowledge. You are doubtless omniscient and worshipped by Devas always".

43-44. Told thus, Rudra said again, "O lord, give me another boon by which you will take a form with which you will worship me and bear me and get a boon from me, and as a result of that you will become the most worshipful among gods.

Viṣṇu said:

45. "For the sake of gods, I will take incarnations and then I will worship you and you will give me boons.

46. As for bearing you, O lord of Umā, I shall bear you for a hundred years assuming the form of a cloud".

47. So saying, Viṣṇu became a cloud, drew up Rudra from the water, and said:

48. "The eleven persons who came out earlier, are Vairājas and they have gone to the earth with the name 'Ādityas'.

49. The twelfth part of mine has descended on earth with the name 'Viṣṇu' and will worship you".

50. So saying, Nārāyaṇa, out of his own part produced a divine cloud full of sound, and it is not known where he disappeared.

Rudra said:

51. Thus this great Hari who is omnipresent and omnipotent, became a giver of boon to me in yore, as a result of which I am supreme among gods.

52. There is no god above Nārāyaṇa in the past or future. This is the secret propounded by the Vedas and Purāṇas.

53. I have thus told you how Viṣṇu is to be propitiated.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Cosmology

Varāha said:

1. The sages then asked the ancient, eternal and omnipresent Rudra, three-eyed and holder of the trident.

The sages said:

2-3. You are beyond us and the Devas. So we ask you a

question. O lord of Umā, be pleased to tell us about the magnitude of the earth and the position of mountains in detail.

Rudra said:

4-5. In the Purāṇas this earth is considered to be the world. So I shall briefly describe this earth. Please listen.

6. The great Nārāyaṇa who pervades all over the world, who is atomic, unknowable, pure and whose ultimate form can be known by Supreme knowledge alone, who is indicated as broadchested, wearing yellow garment and holding the earth, and who is spoken of as beyond the three qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and as neither long nor short, neither big nor small etc., and who is of the nature of pure knowledge, created water. Having created that, the primordial man Nārāyaṇa, who pervades the entire world, and is of the nature of all gods, sacrifices and water, produced from his navel a lotus during his yogic slumber. In it arose the creator Brahmā, the great god, the repository of the Vedas. He produced the repositories of knowledge like Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra, and then Svāyambhuva Manu and those from Marīci to Dakṣa. From Svāyambhuva Manu created by the lord, further creation began to proceed. He had two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda.

7. Priyavrata had ten sons, Āgnīdhra, Agnibāhu, Medhas, Medhātithi, Dhruva, Jyotiṣmān, Dyutimān, Havya, Vapuṣmān and Savana. Priyavrata established seven of his sons in seven islands. Āgnīdhra was made the lord of Jambūdvīpa, Medhātithi the lord of Śākadvīpa, Jyotiṣmān the lord of Krauñca, Dyutimān the lord of Śālmalī, Havya the lord of Gomeda, Vapuṣmān the lord of Plakṣa and Savana the lord of Puṣkara. Savana, the lord of Puṣkara had two sons Mahāvīti and Dhātaka. Their regions were known after their names. Thus Dhātaka had Dhātakikhaṇḍa and Kumuda had Kaumuda.[1] Jyotiṣmān, the lord of Śālmalī[2], had three sons, Kuśa, Vaidyuta and Jīmūtavāhana. Their regions came to be known after them. Dyutimān had seven sons, Kuśala, Manugavya, Pīvara, Andhra, Andhakāraka, Muni and Dundubhi and seven regions in Krauñca came to be known after them.

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1. Kumuda seems to be another name for Mahāvīti.
2. This contradicts with the earlier statement that Dyutimān is the lord of Śālmalī.

8. Jyotiṣmān, the lord of Kuśadvīpa,[1] had seven sons, Udbhida, Veṇumān, Rathapāla, Manas, Dhṛti, Prabhākara and Kapila and they had regions with their names. Medhātithi, the lord of Śaka, had seven sons, Nābhi, Śāntabhaya, Śiśiramukha, Udama, Nanda, Śivakṣemaka and Dhruva. They had regions with their names. Nābhi had Hemakūṭa, Kimpuruṣa, Naiṣadha, Harivarṣa, Merumadhya, Ilāvṛta, Nīla, Ramyaka, Śveta, Uttarakuru, Mālyavān, Bhadrāśva, Gandhamādana and Ketumāla. This is the division of the earth in Svāyambhuva Manvantara. In every aeon seven kings each thus rule the earth. This happens in every aeon.

9. I shall now narrate the creation by Nābhi. Nābhi begot in Merudevī the son named Ṛṣabha, his son was Bharata. To Bharata his father gave the region to the South of Hemādri called the great Bhārata. Bharata's son was Sumati. Bharata gave his kingdom to Sumati and retired to the forest. Sumati's son was Tejas, his son Indradyumna, his son Parameṣṭhī, his son Pratihartā, his son Nikhāta, his son Unnetā, his son Abhāva, his son Udgātā, his son Prastotā, his son Vibhu, his son Pṛthu, his son Ananta, his son Gaya, his son Naya, his son Virāṭa, his son Sudhīmān.

10. Sudhīmān had hundred sons and by them was the population increased. The Bhāratavarṣa with its seven islands is occupied by them.

11. This earth is enjoyed by their descendants. There are seventyone aeons like Kṛta, Tretā etc.[3]

12. Incidentally I have given an account of Svāyambhuva Manvantara. Know this well.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Jambūdvīpa and Meru

Rudra said:

1. I shall now tell you in detail about the Jambūdvīpa and the number of oceans and islands in it.

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1. Earlier Jyotiṣmān is spoken of as lord of Krauñca.

2. The Yugas are generally given as only four, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

2. Also the number of regions in it, the different rivers etc, and again their extent and the movements of the sun and the moon.

3. It is not easy to describe thousands of islands within the seven major ones by which the whole universe is filled.

4. I shall say about the seven islands and also about the sun and moon, about which people propound logical authority.

5. But it is not possible for logic to accomplish what is unthinkable. And what is beyond nature is really unthinkable.

6. I shall, therefore, describe Jambūdvīpa as it is and the dimensions of its different regions.

7. It is one hundred and one thousand yojanas[1] in extent and is strewn all over with human settlements.

8. It is full of Siddhas and Cāraṇas[2] and is beautiful with mountains full of rocks and minerals.

9. It has numerous rivers arising from the mountains and is globular.

10. In this remains the great lord surrounded by nine (creators?). It is encircled by the saline ocean.

11. In the expansive Jambūdvīpa there are six broad and long mountains.

12. There are oceans on the east and west. There is Himavān full of snow and Hemakūṭa full of gold.

13. There is the big mountain Niṣadha which gives pleasure in all its parts and the mount Meru which is of four (main) colours and contains gold.

14. It (Meru) is round and uniform in shape and has variegated colours. It has in it groups of Prajāpatis.

15. It arose from the navel of the great Brahmā. It is white in colour on the eastern side and this represents the Brahmin.

16. On the southern side it is yellow and this represents the Vaiśya.

17. On the western side it is black like the bee and this represents the Śūdra symbolising service.

18. On the northern side it is red in colour and this represents the Kṣatriya. This is the division according to colour.

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1. One Yojana is equal to eight miles.
2. Siddhas and Cāraṇas are semi-divine beings.

19. The blue parts contain Vaiḍūrya stones, the pale white parts contain gold. The parts with the colour of peacock feathers contain highly pure gold.

20. These mountains have Siddhas and Cāraṇas in them. Their internal extent is nine thousand (yojanas).

21. In the middle is the region Ilāvṛta on which stands Meru. It spreads thousands of yojanas on all sides.

22. Mahāmeru stands in the middle like smokeless fire. It is half a Vedi in extent on the northern and southern sides.

23. There are six regions there each with a mountain. The periphery of each region is one yojana.

24. Two each of these are for the thousands of Kṣatriyas. Their extent is that of Jambūdvīpa.

25. Occupying one hundred thousand yojanas are two mountains, Nīla and Niṣadha.

26. Smaller than these are the white Hemakūṭa and the peaky Himavān, Niṣadha has the same dimension as Jambūdvīpa.

27. A twelfth part of it is the dimension of Hemakūṭa and Himavān has the dimension of a twentieth part of Hemakūṭa.

28. An eighth part of Himavān lies between the east and west. Because of the expansive nature of the island, there appears increase and decrease.

29. In the regions, just as there are mountains, there are settlements of people.

30. It is not easy to go from one settlement to another since each is surrounded by steep mountains and rivers.

31. Different kinds of beings live there. In the region of Himavān, the people are the Bhāratas.

32. In Hemakūṭa the people are Kimpuruṣas. After Hemakūṭa is Niṣadha. The settlement there is Harivarṣa.

33. After Harivarṣa is Ilāvṛta. After Ilāvṛta is the well known Ramyaka which is blue.

34. After Ramyaka is the well known Hiraṇmaya which is white. After Hiraṇmaya is Śṛṅgavān where we get Kuru.

35. Like a bow are two regions in the south and north. Of the four islands, Ilāvṛta is square-shaped.

36. Half a Vedi of Niṣadha on the southern side is low and half a Vedi on the northern side is peaky.

37. On this southern side are three regions and there are three on the northern side too. Between these, where the Meru stands, is Ilāvṛta.

38. Its extent is thirtyfour thousand yojanas. On its eastern side is the mountain Gandhamādana.

39. In its length, breadth and height it is similar to mount Mālyavān. In the middle is the golden mount Meru.

40. It is full of gold and has four colours. All the vital elements and living beings arose from it.

41. Taking the original indefinite form of earth as a lotus, Meru may be considered as its pericarp, and from it to have evolved the four major (outer) petals and the definite form with five qualities.

42. Then arose all activities and men of virtue living for several kalpas.

43. The best of Men (the Lord), who is the great yogin, the great God to be contemplated upon by the whole world, is attained by the great men who have realised the self.

44. His form is imperishable, endless and pervades the whole universe and he does not possess body constituted of bones, flesh and marrow.

45. He is all-pervading and bears all forms because of his being a yogi and the great Master. Because of him there arose in the world the great lotus.

46. In that great lotus arose the great lord, the four-faced (Brahmā).

47. He is the chief of the creators and the overlord of the whole world. The seeds of creation have arisen from him.

48. The creation is now explained in detail. That water full of gems is the body of Viṣṇu.

49. The earth arose in the form of the lotus with forests and lakes. It is this world lotus that expanded itself.

50. I shall recount this expansion in its order, please listen O Brahmins.

There are four regions in it.

51. There is the mighty mountain Meru. It has different colours. On the eastern side it is white.

52. It is yellow on the south, black on the west and red on the north.

53. The white part of Meru is for the clan of kings. It shines like the rising sun and like fire without smoke.

54. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas in height, sixteen thousand yojanas deep and sixteen thousand yojanas in length.

55. It has a table-land thirtytwo thousand yojanas in extent. The area of its expanse is thrice this.

56. One division of it has ninety thousand yojanas.

57. Beyond that is one of six thousand yojanas more.

58. This mountain is divine and is full of celestial herbs. The houses (built) in it are all of gold.

59. In this big mountain, groups of Devas, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas and Apsarases delight themselves.

60. All round the Meru are auspicious abodes. There are four regions on its four sides.

61. They are Bhadrāśva on the east, Bhārata on the south, Ketumāla on the west and Kuru on the north.

62. The pericarp of this lotus covers several thousand yojanas.

63. It has fifteen stamens each a yojana long and their interspaces (at the bottom) occupy eightyfour yojanas each.

64. The stamens pervade a space of thirty thousand yojanas.

65. The length is one hundred thousand and the breadth eighty thousand (yojanas). There are four parts of fourteen thousand yojanas.

66. Listen now to the account about what I told you as the pericarp.

67. It is attractive with hundreds of jewelled petals of various colours, golden and shining like the rising sun.

68. It has a thousand protrusions and thousand depressions and is fully circular.

69. In it there is the assembly of Brahmā with splendidly jewelled arches and full of Brahmarṣis.

70. It is known by the name Manovatī in all the worlds. The glory of the great lord, resplendent like a thousand suns, is well marked there.

71. The groups of Devas propitiate the four-faced Brahmā with sacrifices and prayers.

72-74. Also by those great men who have given up all desires by those who are of good mind and taken to righteous living,

devoted to please the manes and gods, and by those householders who are full of humility, inclined to honour guests and of detached mind.

75. Those who with a resolve get their sins removed by their yogic practices like yama, niyama etc, attain the commendable white Brahmaloka.

76. The final position is beyond a height of fourteen thousand yojanas.

77. Above that is the beautiful black place luminous like the rising sun in the mountain full of gems and minerals.

78-80. The mountain with the circular base is thirty thousand yojanas and from a place in it which is ten yojanas long starts the river which begins flowing upwards and then falls on the earth. This flows through Amarāvatī, the city of gods.

81. Thrown out by this river, the sun, the moon and the stars rise and set and render service.

82. The Brahmins propitiate all the eight great mountains.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The cities of the eight Dikpālas

Rudra said:

1-2. On the resplendent eastern part of Meru full of different minerals and in the form of a circular extension, there is the city of the immortals full of mighty gods and demons, full of gold and with well-devised pathways and arches.

3- To its north-east with hundreds of spires and extensive lakes, decerated with flowers and flags, is the prosperous city of Indra named Amarāvatī abounding in Devas, Yakṣas, Apsarases and sages.

6. In the interior of Amarāvatī there is a hall full of diamonds and other gems, which is well known as the assembly Sudharmā.

7. In it remains the thousand-eyed Indra, husband of Śacī, surrounded by Siddhas and other divine beings.

8. Indra, revered by all other gods, is the president of this assembly. The great sun is there.

9. On its side, as broad and splendid like it, is the city of Agni, called Tejovatī.

10. Next is the beautiful city of Vaivasvata (Yama), well known as Saṁyaminī.

11. On the fourth direction is the city of Nirṛti, called Kṛṣṇavatī.

12. The fifth, on the northern side, is the city of the lord of waters (Varuṇa), called Śuddhavatī.

13. Beyond that in the north is the city of Vāyu, called Gandhavatī.

14. On its right is the beautiful city of Kubera, called Mahodaya with a hall of Vaiḍūrya gems.

15. On the eighth quarter is the city of Īśāna, called Manoharā.

16. This world of gods, prayed for by people in their different āśramas (stages of life) is svarga (heaven).

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

The Meru Mountain

Rudra said:

1. The middle of Meru, which is considered as the pericarp of the world-lotus, has (a circumference) of one thousand yojanas.

2. Its bottom is (in circumference) fortyeight thousand (yojanas).

3. In it there are thousands of mounts and those at the extremity of the eight quarters are the mounts that indicate the limit.

4. Among these, two named Jaṭhara and Devakūṭa are on the eastern side.

5. O great Brahmins, listen to my account of this Meru, the golden mountain, in respect of its parts in different directions

6. There are four prominent parts in the four directions and fourteen parts at the top, because of which the earth, with its seven islands, moves.

7. Its extent is ten thousand yojanas and its vertical and horizontal parts are covered with yellow orpiment.

8. It has caves full of red arsenic and is strewn with golden gems. It has numerous fine mansions and playgrounds.

9. On its eastern part is the mountain Mandara, on its south Gandhamādana, on the west Vipula and on the north Supārśva.

10. On their peaks are four great trees which are resorted to by gods, demons and Apsarases.

11. At the peak of the Mandara mountain is the big tree called Kadamba with hanging branches.

12. Its flowers have the size of big pots and they blossom throughout the year and have high fragrance.

13. The entire area where its smell spreads is very sacred.

14. This is the tree of trees and is famous, beautiful and auspicious.

15. Lord Viṣṇu, meditated upon through efficacious mantras, remains in it.

16. This is also called 'Bhadrāśva', because this great god remains in it surveying the whole world.

17. On the peak of the southern mountain is the Jambū tree in a cluster with big branches full of flowers and fruits.

18. From that fall down at the top of the mountain fruits by name Atisa, sweet and fragrant and like ambrosia.

19. From this great mountain arise many rivers which make the places fertile.

20. There we get gold named Jāmbūnada glowing like fire and used by the gods for their decoration.

21-22. Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas drink the juice of the jambu fruit which is like ambrosia and delight themselves in the southern region which is known as Jambūloka. People call it Jambūdvīpa.

23. In the mountain Vipula on the south, there is the very big tree called Aśvattha with a big trunk spreading all around. It is the abode of all noble qualities.

24. It bears beautiful fruits big like pots throughout the year.

25. Because of the flags fluttering in this region, resorted to by Devas and Gandharvas, it is known as Ketumāla (literally one having a row of flags). O Brahmins, listen to this name.

26. At the time of churning the milky ocean, a garland and a banner appeared here and hence it is known as Ketumāla.

27. At the top of the peak of Supārśva we get the big tree Vaṭa.

28. It has got a big trunk; it spreads over three yojanas, grows also downwards and is highly clustered by hanging branches.

29. It bears golden fruits big like pots.

30. Adding lustre to the tree are the mind-born sons of Brahmā, the younger brothers of Sanatkumāra.

31. They are seven in number and are known as Kurus. They are calm in mind and free from passion.

32-33. They are eternal and they remain in this region which goes by their name. These Kurus are the lords of the region.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Mandara and other mountains

Rudra said:

1-8. I shall now tell you about the four great mountains and about the lakes in them, which are beautiful, from which blow the gentle and sweet-smelling breeze, which haverivers flowing out of them, each of which have nine regions frequented by the celestial couples, which are full of gems and sacred spots, which always sound with waterfalls, which are full of lotuses, lilies, and other beautiful plants.

9. The lake in the eastern mountain is Aruṇoda, the one in the southern is Mānasa, the one in thewestern is Asitoda and the one in the northern is Mahābhadra. All these are full of lilies of various colours.

10. I shall tell you now about the mounts around Aruṇoda, listen to me.

11-12. They are Vikaṅka, Maṇiśṛṅga, Supātra, Upala,

Mahānīla, Kumbha, Suvindu, Madana, Veṇunaddha, Sumedas and Niṣadha, all of them holy.

13. The mounts around Mānasa, I shall now enumerate.

14-16. They are Triśikhara, Śiśira, Kapi, Śatamākṣa, Turaga, Tāmrābha, Viṣa, Śvetodana, Samūla, Sarala, Ratnaketu, Ekamūla, Mahāśṛṅga, Gajamūla, Śāvaka Pañcaśaila, Kailāsa and Himavān.

17. The mounts on the next, namely on the west (around Asitod a) I shall now give you.

18-20. They are Kapila, Piṅgala, Bhadra, Sarasa, Kumuda, Madhumān, Garjana, Markaṭa, Kṛṣṇa, Pāṇḍava, Sahasraśiras, Pāriyātra and Śṛṅgavān. I shall tell you now about the mounts around Mahābhadra in the north.

21-23. They are Haṁsakūṭa, Vṛṣahaṁsa, Kapiñjala, Indraśaila, Nīla, Kanakaśṛṅga, Śataśṛṅga, Puṣkara, Meghaśaila, Virāja and Jāruji.

24. In this manner know the places, towns and lakes in order from the north.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

The Valleys of Meru I

Rudra said:

1-2. Between the mountains Asita (Kṛṣṇa) and Kumuda is the valley which is three hundred yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad and full of all kinds of birds and beasts.

3. In it there is a beautiful big lake with sweet water and huge lotuses, white and red, in which are seated gods, demons, Gandharvas and the great snakes.

4. Its placid water is resorted to by all. It is called Śrīsaras and it always sparkles.

5-7. Amidst that array of lotuses there is a particularly big lotus shining like the sun, astounding in its size, spreading with a crore of petals and attractive filaments, and with the bees humming all around. In it is seated the great goddess Lakṣmī, the embodiment of prosperity.

8-9. On the bank of that lake is the forest of Bilva trees always full of flowers and fruits wherein live Siddhas. It is two hundred yojanas in length and hundred yojanas in breadth.

10. It has numerous big trees as high as half a krośa with thousands of branches.

11. They bear thousands of fruits green and grey, smelling sweet and tasty like nectar.

12. The place is filled with the fruits falling from these trees and it is known all over the world as Śrīvana.

13. It has eight peaks. Many Devas and bilva-eating sages, live in it. Lakṣmī, adored by groups of siddhas, ever remains there.

14-15. Between the mountains Ekācala and Maṇiśṛṅga there is a lotus-grove, two hundred yojanas long and a hundred yojanas broad, resorted to by Siddhas and Cāraṇas.

16. The flower there appears as if held by Lakṣmī. There are big peaks as high as half a krośa.

17. With branches full of flowers, the whole place is made reddish yellow.

18-19. In this the flowers are each three cubits long and two cubits broad and with filaments of the colour of red arsenic and sweet-smelling. It always hums with inebriate bees and there are in it gods, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas and Yakṣas, and also Kinnaras, Apsarases and Nāgas.

20. There is the hermitage of the divine Kaśyapa in it and also other hermitages.

21. Between Mahānīla and Kakubha (Kumbha?) there is the river Sukhā, and on its bank is a big forest fifty yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad.

22. This forest is Tālavana (forest of Palmyras) with the trees rising to a height of half a krośa.

23. These trees are full of big, strong and juicy fruits of the colour of collyrium.

24. The whole place smells sweet and it is resorted to by Siddhas. This bears close resemblance to Airāvata, the great elephant.

25-26. Between Airāvata, Rudra (Kailāsa)? and Devaśīla (Pañcaśaila?) there is a tableland formed of a single rock, thousand yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad, without any kind of trees or plants, and with but a small stream of water.

27-28. Thus has been narrated, O Brahmins, the valleys in order around Meru.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Valleys of Meru II

Rudra said:

1. Let us now see the valleys on the southern side occupied by Siddhas. Between Śiśira and Pataṅga is the white land which is without women and trees. But its sugar-cane-like peak has trees, and around it there is the grove of Udumbara trees full of birds.

2. In this grove, the trees bear fruits as big as large tortoises. It is resorted to by all the eight kinds of demigods.[1]

3. In this region flow many rivers which are full of clear and sweet water. In it there is the hermitage of Kardama Prajāpati frequented by many sages and men. Around it there is a forest extending to a hundred yojanas.

Between the mountains Tāmrābha and Pataṅga there is a big lake hundred yojanas broad and twice as long, full of different kinds of lotuses glowing like the rising sun and resorted to by Siddhas and Gandharvas.

4. In the middle is a tall peak, hundred yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad, full of a variety of minerals. At its top is a broad pathway leading to a vast enclosure with a jewelled porch. Within it is the city of Vidyādharas. Therein lives the Vidyādhara king by name Puloma with numerous attendants.

5. Between the mountains Sumūla and Vasudhāra, there is the place called Bilvasthalī, fifty yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad.

6. The Bilva trees there bear fruits big like pitchers, the ground there is strewn with these fruits, and it is resorted to by Guhyakas and the like who eat these fruits.

Between Vasudhāra and Ratnadhāra there is the Kiṁśuka

1. The demigods are Vidyādharas, Apsarases, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Piśācas and Guhyakas.

forest, a hundred yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad, spreading smell of the blossoms over a hundred yojanas. It has abundant water and is used by the Siddhas.

7. In it is the abode of Āditya. This god, the sun, appears month after month. Devas and others bow to Prajāpati, the creator of the world.

Between Pañcakūṭa and Kailāsa, there is the expansive land which is one thousand yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad, white like the swan, unapproached by trivial beings, and which is like the ladder to heaven.

8. Let us see now the valleys on the western side. Between Supārśva and Śikhiśaila there is a stony plateau which is untouchably hot for ever. In its middle is a part, a hundred yojanas in extent, which is the place of fire. Here fire which is the destroyer of the world, blazes for ever without fuel.

Between the mountainas Kumuda and Añjana is the Mātuluṅgakasthala (the place of Pomegranate), inaccessible to beasts and covered by yellow fruits.

In it is the holy pond used by Siddhas. This grove is Bṛhaspati's.

Then between the mountains Piñjara and Gaura there are lakes extending to hundreds of yojanas. They are full of big lilies.

9. In it is the abode of the great lord Viṣṇu.

Between the mountains Śukla and Pāṇḍura there is a single rock ninety yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad without trees. In it there is a pond of still water with different kinds of lotuses. In its middle is a big banyan tree spreading over five yojanas. Beneath it sits lord Śiva wearing blue cloth, praised by Yakṣas and others.

Between the mountains Sahasraśikhara and Kumuda is a sugar-cane-like peak, fifty yojanas long and twenty yojanas broad, full of birds and numerous trees bearing tasty fruits. In it is the divine hermitage of Indra.

Between Śaṅkhakūṭa and Ṛṣabha there is the beautiful grove of Punnāga trees extending over several yojanas and bearing sweet-smelling fruits as big as bilvas. In it live the Nāgas and others inebriated with the juice of the Punnāga fruits.

10. Between the mountains Kapiñjala and Nāga, there is the place, two hundred yojanas long and one hundred yojanas

broad, occupied by various kinds of people and with grapes and dates in abundance.

Between Puṣkara and Mahāmegha is the place, one hundred yojanas long and sixty yojanas broad, called Pāṇitala, without trees and plants. On its sides are four big forests and lakes extending over several yojanas. In it there are fierce valleys, ten, five, seven, eighty, thirty and twenty yojanas long.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The domains of Devas in the Mountains

Rudra said:

1. I shall now state about the domains of Devas in these mountains At the top of the mountain called Sītā is the pleasure spot of Indra. Therein is the big grove of Pārijāta trees. On its eastern side is the Kuñjara hill. At its top there are eight cities of Dānavas.

2. In the mountain Vajraka there are many cities of Rākṣasas. They are called Nīlakas and they are capable of changing their shapes. In the mountain Mahānīla, there are fifteen thousand cities of Kinnaras. They are the regions of fifteen Kinnara kings like Deva datta, Candra and others. In the mountain Candrodaya we get golden underground cities wherein live Nāgas. The Dānavas are established there under an arrangement with Garuḍa. In (the mountain) Veṇumān there are three cities of Vidyādharas, each thousand yojanas in length and hundred yojanas in breadth. These are the regions of Vidyādhara Kings like Ulūka, Romaśa and Mahāvetra.

3. In each of these Garuḍa is established. In the mountain Kuñjara Paśupati (Śiva) is permanently established. In Vasudhāra the great god Śaṅkara (Śiva) on the bull remains with his retinue of crores of Gaṇas. In this live Vasus.

4. At the tops of Vasudhāra and Ratnadhāra there are eight and seven cities (respectively) for Vasus and seven sages. In the great mountain Ekaśṛṅga is the seat of four-faced Brahmā.

In the mountain Gaja the goddess herself takes abode with her retinue.

5. In the mountain Vasudhāra is the city, the abode of sages, Siddhas and Vidyādharas with forts and gateways. In it live the militant Gandharvas called Anekaparvatas with their chief Rājarāja. In Pañcakūṭa there are Devas and Rākṣasas, in Śataśṛṅga Dānavas, and there are hundred cities of Dānavas and Yakṣas.

6. On the western portion of Prabhedaka there are the cities of Devas, Dānavas, Siddhas and others. At the top of this mountain there is a big slab. The moon descends on it every new moon day. On its northern portion is Trikūṭa. Brahmā remains in it sometimes. There we get the abode of Fire. Fire in concrete form is worshipped by gods.

7. On the north, in the mountain Śṛṅga, we get the abodes of gods. On its eastern part is the abode of Nārāyaṇa, in the middle that of Brahmā and in the west that of Śiva. There we see a few cities of Yakṣas. On the north, in the mountain Jātuccha, there is a lake covering an area of thirty yojanas. In it lives the hundred-headed serpent-king Nanda.

8. Thus are the eight Devaparvatas (mountains of gods). They have the colours of gold, silver, ruby, cat's eye, vermillion etc., in order. This part of Earth is full of millions of houses of Siddhas and Vidyādharas. On the side of Meru is the world of Siddhas full of Kesara trees. The earth is in the form of a lotus. This is the general description given in the Purāṇas.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The descent of the rivers

Rudra said:

1. Now listen to the descent of the rivers. From what is known as the ocean of the sky, starts the river of the sky. This river is always agitated by the elephant of Indra. (As a result) it falls at the top of Meru in eightyfour thousand streams. And flowing upto the foot of the Meru, it forms into four and follows

a clockwise direction for six thousand yojanas with the names Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣus and Bhadrā. Among them the one that reaches earth slashing eightyone thousand mountains is known as Gaṅgā.

2. Now we describe Amaragaṇḍika on the side of Gandhamādana. It is thirtyone thousand yojanas long and four hundred yojanas broad. This region is Ketumāla with mighty men black in complexion and beautiful women lotus-like in complexion. There we get big jack trees. The son of Brahmā is the lord there. The people here drink water, are free from decay and disease and live for ten thousand years. On the eastern side of Mālyavān is the Pūrvagaṇḍikā and from Ekaśṛṅga extends Mānasa for one thousand yojanas. This region is known as Bhadrāśva.

3. There we get the forest of wholesome Rasāla trees. The mangoes are black, men white, women lotus-coloured and their life is one thousand years. There are five great mountains, Śailavarṇa, Mālākhya, Korajaska, Triparṇa and Nīla. The regions watered (by the streams from these mountains) have the same names.

4. Those regions consume the water from the rivers Sītā, Suvāhinī, Haṁsavatī, Kāsā, Mahāvaktra, Candravatī, Kāverī, Surasā, Ākhyāvatī, Indravatī, Aṅgāravāhinī, Harittoyā, Somāvartā, Śatahradā, Vanamālā, Vasumatī, Haṁsā, Suparṇā, Pañcagaṅgā, Dhanuṣmatī, Maṇivaprā, Subrahmabhāgā, Vilāsinī, Kṛṣṇatoyā, Puṇyodā, Nāgavatī, Śivā, Śaivālinī, Maṇitaṭā, Kṣīroda, Varuṇatālī and Viṣṇupadī. Those who drink the waters of these rivers live for ten thousand years and become devotees of Rudra and Umā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

The regions and rivers in the mountain Naiṣadha

Rudra said:

1. Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla have been described in detail. Now are described the major mountains, regions and rivers on

the western side of the great mountain Naiṣadha. The seven major mountains, Viśākha, Kambala, Jayanta, Kṛṣṇa, Harita, Aśoka and Vardhamāna, have given rise to crores of others. The regions occupied by people there are also known by the same name (as of the mountains).

2. The settlements upto Sauragrāma like Sātapa, Kṛtasurā, Śravaṇakambala, Māheyācala, Kūṭavāsa, Mūlatapa, Krauñca, Kṛṣṇāṅga, Maṇipaṅkaja, Cūḍamala and Somīya and those upto the end of the sea, like Kurakuñja, Suvarṇataṭa, Kuha, Śvetāṅga, Kṛṣṇapāda, Vida, Kapila, Karṇika, Mahiṣa, Kubja, Karanāṭa, Mahotkaṭa, Śuka, Nāka, Sagaja, Bhūma, Kakurañjana, Mahānāha, Kiki, Saparṇa, Bhaumaka, Coraka, Dhūmajanma, Aṅgāraja, Madhureya, Śukeya, Cakeya, Śravaṇa, Mattakāśika, Godāvāma, Kulapañjāba, Varjaha and Modaśālaka consume the water flowing from these mountains.

3. Among these rivers, Plākṣā, Mahākadambā, Mānasī, Śyāmā, Sumedhā, Bahulā, Vivarṇā, Puṅkhā, Mālā, Darbhavatī, Bhadranadī, Śukanadī, Pallavā, Bhīmā, Prabhañjanā, Kāmbā, Kuśāvatī, Dakṣā, Kāsavatī, Tuṅgā, Puṇyodā, Candrāvatī, Sumūlāvatī, Kakupadminī, Viśālā, Karaṇṭakā, Pīvarī, Mahāmāyā, Mahiṣī, Mānuṣī, Caṇḍā are the more important. The others are small rivers and they are in thousands.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

The regions on the South and North of Meru

Rudra said:

1. Now are duly described the people who live on the northern regions as well as those who live on the southern side.

2. O Brahmins, listen to what I say. In the region to the south of Meru and north of Śveta, there is Ramyaka belonging to Vāyu.

3. The people there are born pure, highly intelligent and free from old age and disaster.

4. The extremely big banyan tree grows there. Drinking the juice of its fruits, all the people there attain divine form and live for ten thousand years.

5. To the north of Śveta and south of Triśṛṅga, we get the region named Hiraṇmaya where flows the river Hairaṇvatī.

6. The mighty Yakṣas, who can assume any form at will, live there. The duration of their life is eleven thousand years.

7. Many live there for fifteen thousand years.

8. The breadfruit and jack trees flourish there. By the juice of their fruits alone, one can live for many days.

9. In Triśṛṅga with its peaks of gems and gold, from its northern peak, upto the southern ocean[1], is the northern Kuru. There we get sappy trees and many juice. In those trees are clothes and ornaments. The land is full of gems and the sands are golden. People dropped from heaven live there, with duration of life of thirteen thousand years.

10. On the western side of this island, after four thousand yojanas, we get the celestial region Candradvīpa covering an area of one thousand yojanas. In its middle are two waterfalls called Candrakānta and Sūryakānta. Between them is the great river Candrāvartā with numerous tributaries and many trees (on the banks).

11. On the northern side of Kuru is the celestial region Sūryadvīpa covering an area of one thousand yojanas washed by the waves of the ocean. In its middle is a great mountain, a hundred yojanas in extent. From it arises the river called Sūryāvartā. The abode of the Sun is there. Therein live the people with the Sun as their god and having the same complexion as his, with duration of life of ten thousand years.

12. On the western side of this island, after four thousand yojanas, we find in the ocean the island called Bhadrākara covering an area of one thousand yojanas. Therein is the abode of Vāyu adorned by numerous gems. There Vāyu remains in corporal form. There the people are golden in colour and live for five thousand years.

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1. Perhaps the northern ocean is meant.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The nine divisions of Bhārata

Rudra said:

1. Thus has been described the arrangement in the world-lotus. Now listen to the ninefold division of Bhārata. These (divisions) are Indra, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇa, Gabhasti, Nāgadvīpa, Saumya, Gandharva, Vāruṇa and Bhārata (proper). Each is surrounded by an ocean and is one thousand yojanas in extent. There are seven major mountains.

2. These major mountains are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

3. There are minor mountains like Mandara, Śāra, Dardura, Kailāsa, Maināka, Vaidyuta, Vārandhama, Pāṇḍura, Tuṅgaprastha, Kṛṣṇagiri, Jayanta, Airāvata, Ṛṣyamūka, Gomanta, Citrakūṭa, Śrīparvata, Cakorakuṭa, Śrīśaila and Kṛtasthala. There are smaller mountains also. In the settlements in these dwell Āryas and Mlecchas. They drink water in the rivers flowing there.

4. The rivers are Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī, Śatadru, Vitastā, Vipāśā, Candrabhāgā, Sarayū, Yamunā, Irāvatī, Devikā, Kuhū, Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, Bāhudā, Dṛṣadvatī, Kauśikī, Nisvīrā, Gaṇḍakī, Cakṣuṣmatī and Lohitā, all rising from the foot of the Himālayas. Vedasmṛti, Vedavatī, Sindhuparṇā, Candanābhā, Nāśadācārā, Rohīpārā, Carmaṇvatī, Vidiśā, Vedatrayī and Vapantī arise from Pāriyātra.

5. Śoṇa, Jyotirathā, Narmadā, Surasā, Mandākinī, Daśārṇā, Citrakūṭā, Tamasā, Pippalā, Karatoyā, Piśācikā, Citrotpalā, Viśālā, Vañjukā, Bāhuvāhinī, Śuktimatī, Virajā, Paṅkinī and Rātrī arise from Ṛkṣa. Maṇijālā, Śubhā, Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Śīghrodā, Veṣṇā, Pāśā, Vaitaraṇī, Vaidipālā, Kumudvatī, Toyā, Durgā, Antyā and Girā arise from the base of the Vindhya. Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Kṛṣṇā, Veṇī, Vañjulā, Tuṅgabhadrā, Suprayogā and Bāhyakāverī arise from the foot of Sahya.

6. Śatamālā, Tāmraparṇī, Puṣpāvatī and Utpalāvatī arise from Malaya. Triyāmā, Ṛṣikulyā, Ikṣulā, Trivindālā, Mūlinī and Vaṁśavarā have their origin in Mahendra. Ṛṣikā, Lūsatī, Mandagāminī and Palāśinī have their source in Śuktimān. These are the main rivers arising from the major mountains.

The others are minor rivers. This Jambūdvīpa is one lakh yojanas in extent.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Śākadvīpa

Rudra said:

1. Now know about Śākadvīpa. It is double the extent of Jambūdvīpa and the saline ocean surrounding it also is double the size. There live in it blessed people, long-lived and free from famine, decay and disease. There are seven major mountains here which have the saline ocean on one side and milky ocean on the other.

2. On the east is the extensive mountain called Udaya. To the west of it is the mountain named Jaladhāra, also called Candra. Indra drinks its water and then pours it down (as rain). In it there is another mountain called Śvetaka. It has six parts. Here the people play a good deal. There is another mountain called Rajata. It is also known as Śāka. Beyond it is Āmbikeya. It is also called Vibhrājasa.

3. The same is called Kesarī. The wind arises from there. The regions are also known after the mountains, as Udaya, Sukumāra, Jaladhāra, Kṣemaka and Mahādruma as principal names. The other names of the mountains are also applied. In the middle is the Śāka tree. There are seven main rivers with two names each. These are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Nandā, Veṇikā, Dhenuḥ, Ikṣumatī and Gabhasti.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Kuśadvīpa

Rudra said:

1. Now listen to Kuśadvīpa, the third. Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by the milky ocean, and is double in extent of the Śāka-

dvīpa. There are seven major mountains here also, each with two names such as Kumuda, also called Vidruma. The high Hemaparvata is also Droṇa, Puṣpavān is also Kaṅka, Kuśeśaya is also Agnimān, and the sixth Mahiṣa is also Hari. Agni remains there.

2. The seventh is Kakudhra; it is the same as Mandara. These are the mountains in Kuśadvīpa. The divisions in it have also two names each. Kumuda is Śveta, it is named first. The high Lolita is also Veṇumaṇḍala. Valāhaka is Jīmuta and is the same as Rathākāra. Droṇa is Hari and is the same as Balādhana.

3. The rivers there have also two names. Pratoyā is also called Praveśā. The second is Śivā, also called Yaśodā. The third is Citrā, also known as Kṛṣṇā. The fourth is Hrādinī, also called Candrā. The fifth is Vidyullatā, also called Śuklā. The sixth is Varṇā, it is the same as Vibhāvarī. The seventh is Mahatī, the same as Dhṛti. These are the main rivers. The others are minor ones. This is the arrangement in Kuśadvīpa.

4. Śākadvīpa and its position have already been narrated. In its middle is a big mass of Kuśa grass. The Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of curd, equal to amṛta, and double the size of the milky ocean.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Krauñcadvīpā

Rudra said:

1. The fourth is Krauñca, double the dimensions of Kuśa-dvīpa, surrounded by an ocean also double in size. In it also there are seven mountains. The first in Krauñca is Vidyullatā or Raivata, then is Mānasa or Pāvaka. Then is Andhakāra or Acchodaka. Then is Devāvṛta which is called also Surāpa. After this is Deviṣṭha, also called Kāñcanaśṛṅga.

2. After Devananda we get Govinda or Dvivinda. Then is Puṇḍarīka, which is the same as Toyāsaha. These seven mountains in Krauñcadvīpa are all high and full of gems.

3. The regions in Krauñca are: Kuśala or Mādhava, Vāmaka or Saṁvartaka, Uṣṇavān or Saprakāśa, Pāvaka or

Sudarśana, Andhakāra or Sammoha, Munideśa or Prakāśa and Dundubhi or Anartha.

4. There are seven rivers: Gaurī, Kumudvatī, Sandhyā, Rātrī, Manojavā, Khyāti and Puṇḍarīka.

5. Gauri is Puṣpavahā, Kumudvatī is Ārdravatī, Sandhyā is Raudrā, (Rātrī) is Sukhāvahā, (Manojavā) is Bhogajavā, Khyāti is Kṣiprodā, Puṇḍarīka is Bahulā. The minor rivers have different colours and flow in different regions. Krauñca-dvīpa is surrounded by (an ocean of) ghee and beyond it is Śālmali.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Śālmalidvīpa and others

Rudra said:

1. I shall now speak about the people in the remaining three islands. Listen to the account of the fifth, Śālmali.

2. Śālmali is double the size of Krauñca island.

3. This is surrounded by the sea of ghee. It is also double in size. There also we get seven principal mountains, and the same number of rivers. The mountains are big, yellow and full of gold and have the names Sarvaguṇa, Sauvarṇa, Rohita, Sumanasa, Kuśala, Jāmbūnada and Vaidyuta. The regions are also of the same names.

4. Then is the sixth, Gomeda. This is twice the size of Śālmali. There are only two mountains in it, Avasara and Kumuda. The ocean is of Sugarcane juice.

Puṣkara is double its size. In it there is the mountain called Mānasa. This is divided into two and is surrounded by sweet water spreading to the same area as itself.

5. Then is this broad earth forming part of the expansive universe.

These are the regions enumerated. In every aeon Lord Nārāyaṇa assumes the form of a boar and raises it up by a tusk and restores it to its original position.

6. I have thus told you about the dimensions of the earth. May good befall you, O Brahmins. I shall now retire to my abode in Kailāsa.

Varāha said:

7. Saying thus, Rudra immediately left for Kailāsa. All the gods and sages also departed.

CHAPTER NINETY

The Goddess of Creation

Earth said:

1. Some consider the holy Śiva, some Viṣṇu and others Brahmā as the supreme being.

2. I have great curiosity to know who among these is superior and who inferior. Please enlighten me.

Varāha said:

3. O goddess, Nārāyaṇa is the supreme god. Then is Brahmā who arose from him. From Brahmā arose Rudra the omniscient.

4. The wonders Rudra accomplished are numerous. I shall tell you all of them.

5. In the beautiful peak Kailāsa, full of many kinds of minerals, resides the three-eyed lord Śiva.

6. Once this god, who is bowed to by all beings, was in the company of Pārvatī, surrounded by his Gaṇas.

7. Some among the Gaṇas were lion-faced and were roaring like lions. Some were elephant-faced and others horse-faced.

8. Some were crocodile-faced, others boar-faced, yet others mule-faced and donkey-faced.

9. A few were goat-faced and a few others fish-faced. In all, they were all innumerable and holding weapons. Some were singing, some dancing, some running and some jumping.

10. The mighty ones were laughing, clapping and roaring. Some of the leaders were fighting throwing stones at one another.

11. Many were engaged in single combat. Thus were the Gaṇas surrounding Maheśvara.

12. While the Gaṇas were thus mirthful and the lord was playing with his spouse, there came Brahmā in great hurry together with Devas.

13. The great god Rudra, seeing Brahmā arrive there, honoured him and said:

14. "O Brahmā, tell me quickly the object of your hurried visit to me".

Brahmā said:

15. "There is a great Rākṣasa named Andhaka. Being much harassed by him, Devas came to me for help.

16. I then told them that they may go to Śiva and that is why they are here now".

17. Saying this, Brahmā looked at Śiva and at the same time called to his mind the great god Nārāyaṇa.

18. Lord Nārāyaṇa thus came to be between the other two. And Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara came to be unified.

19. They looked at each other minutely, and as a result of the unified looks of the three, a goddess arose.

20. This deity was young and resplendent, had the complexion of the blue lotus and had dark and curly hair.

21. She had shapely nose and forehead and wellformed mouth. All that the god Tvaṣṭā (the celestial architect) had described as five-tongue was well descernible in her.

22. Seeing her, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara asked her who she was and what she wanted to do.

23. That goddess who had the three colours black, white and yellow said:

24. "O great gods, I was born out of the combination of the looks of all the three of you. How do you fail to know me to be the goddess representing your energies ?".

25. Then Brahmā and others were pleased and gave her a boon saying: "O goddess, we name you Trikalā, protect this universe always.

26. You will have other names also based on your attributes, and all these will produce different achievements.

27. There is another thing also. You have three colours. Assume three different forms one with each colour".

28. Thus told by the gods, she became triplicated, one white, another red and the third black.

29. The white body is Brahmā (because of Brahmā element) and creation proceeds from it calmly as ordained by Brahmā.

30. The beautiful body red in colour, is Vaiṣṇavī (because of Viṣṇu's element) and bears conch and disc.

31. She protects the whole universe and is known as Viṣṇumāyā.

32. The body black in colour bears the trident and holds a fierce face. She destroys the universe.

33. The broad-eyed white goddess with the aspect of Brahmā, took leave of him and disappeared.

34. She hid herself in the Śveta mountain and began to perform severe penance desirous of attaining omniscience.

35. The red goddess with the aspect of Viṣṇu took leave of him and went to the Mandara mountain for performing severe penance.

36. The fierce-looking black goddess with the aspect of Rudra, similarly went to perform penance at the Nīla mountain.

37. Then for a long time Brahmā started to create beings, but he could not progress.

38. When the creations made out of the mind of Brahmā thus failed to multiply he began to seriously think about the cause of it.

39. When Brahmā, thus, meditated with his yogic powers, he knew about the goddess performing severe penance at the Śveta mountain.

40. Then he went to the place of her penance and told her who was absorbed in contemplation.

Brahmā said:

41. O beautiful goddess, why do you do this penance? I am pleased with you. You may seek of me a boon.

Sṛṣṭi said:

42. "O god, I don't wish to remain confined to a single place. I seek of you the boon to make me present everywhere".

43. God Brahmā, being thus requested by Sṛṣṭi (the goddess of creation), told her that she would be present everywhere.

44. Told thus, the beautiful Sṛṣṭi dissolved herself in Brahmā.

45. From then onwards, the creation by Brahmā began to grow.

46. Seven arose from Brahma's mind, from them other sages, from them yet others, and from them still others. Thus there are four series of beings.

47. Thus was established beings moving and stationary and all that is expressible by words.

48. Thus was established all that is past and future.

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Sarasvati and others

Varāha said:

1. O fair lady, hear what that goddess did who was made triple by the great god Śiva.

2. The form of the goddess of creation which is beautiful and white, is known as Ekākṣarā (of one syllable) and also Sarvākṣarā (of all syllables).

3. She is also known as Vāgīśā (highest speech) and sometimes as Sarasvatī. She is Vidyeśvarī and Amitākṣarā.

4. She is Jñānanidhi (the abode of all knowledge) and also Vibhāvarī. All the names that are soft and all the names related to knowledge pertain to her.

5. The broad-eyed, beautiful and red-coloured Vaiṣṇavī is another. Raudrī is the third.

6. All the three arose really out of Rudra. It is really a single goddess who is in three froms.

7. Thus have I told you about ancient creation. The entire world of movable and immovable objects is pervaded by her.

8. Brahmā praised the goddess by whom his creation was made to grow.

Brahmā said:

9. Hail O goddess, that arose from truth, firm and eternal, the mother of all, all-pervading.

10. You bestow all achievements, all intelligence and good progeny.

11. You are Svāhā, you are Svadhā, you are the origin of everything, you are Praṇava and the source of all Vedas.

12. You are the source of all gods and demons, all Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Rākṣasas, all animals and all plants.

13. You are Vidyā, Vidyeśvarī, Siddhā, Prasiddhā and Sureśvarī.

14. You know everything, you give all success, you are present everywhere, you are free from all doubts, and you destroy all enemies.

15. You hold all knowledge and bestow all good. I bow to you.

16. He who unites with his wife after her menstrual bath, gets good progeny by your blessing. You destroy all enemies and always remain victorious.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The greatness of Vaiṣṇavī

Varāha said:

1. The goddess Vaiṣṇavī who went to Mandara for performing penance, was the great power representing Rajas.

2. She was doing penance all by herself (at the place) Viśālā. After a long time, her mind became agitated.

3-4. As a result of this agitation there arose hundreds of beautiful damsels with black curly hair and red lips, wearing bracelets and anklets.

5-7. Seeing them all, the goddess created a city with numerous mansions with golden balconies, crystal stairs and water fountains, with jewelled windows and gardens, all on broad roads.

8. The ladies thus created were innumerable, but I shall tell you the names of the more important among them.

9-12. Vidyutprabhā, Candrakāntī, Sūryakāntī, Gambhīrā, Cārukeśī, Sujātā, Mañjukeśinī, Ghṛtācī, Urvaśī, Śaśinī, Śīlamaṇḍitā, Cārukanyā, Viśālākṣī, Dhanyā, Candraprabhā, Girisutā, Sūryaprabhā, Amṛtā, Svayamprabhā, Cārumukhī, Śiva-

dūtī, Vibhāvarī, Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī, Aparājitā and several others in hundreds occupied that fine city.

13. All these in the retinue of the goddess were bearing the rope and the noose, and she herself was seated on the throne.

14. Attended on by these, she began to perform the vrata called Kaumāra.

15. While she was thus engaged in penance, duly attended on by them, there appeared before her Nārada, the son of Brahmā.

16-17. Seeing that great sage, she directed Vidyutprabhā to give him a seat and water for washing the feet.

18. Thereupon Vidyutprabhā offered to Nārada *āsana* (seat), *pādya* (water for feet) and *arghya* (holy water).

19. When Nārada bowed to her and took his seat, she asked him in great joy.

20. "O great sage, welcome to you. From which world are you coming now ? Be pleased to say with what purpose you have come ?".

21-22. Asked by the goddess thus, Nārada who knew all the worlds, said: "From Brahmaloka I went to Indraloka and from there to Rudra's mountain (Kailāsa). From there I have come here to see you". Saying so, he looked intently at the goddess.

23. Seeing her for a while, Nārada became wonder-struck.

24. "How wonderful is her form, how wonderful is her lustre, how wonderful her courage, how wonderful her selflessness in that she is undergoing all this strain.

25. In no other woman can this beauty be seen, be she belong to Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras or Rākṣasas". Thinking thus, his wonder was redoubled.

26. He bowed to her and then jumped into the sky and quickly went to the city of the Rākṣasa chief.

27. That city was known as Mahiṣa and was within the ocean. He went there to the Asura whose form was like a buffalo.

28. When he saw the sage, he duly honoured him with devotion.

29. Thus pleased, Nārada told him about the matchless beauty of the goddess doing penance.

Nārada said:

30. "O lord of Asuras, by means of a boon, the entire universe has become yours. Now hear about a jewel among damsels,

31. From Brahmaloka I happened to go to the Mandara mountain. There I saw a city, Devīpura, full of hundreds of young women.

32. The chief among them is performing penance. Like her we cannot find one among gods, demons or Yakṣas.

33. I have not seen one like her in all my wanderings all over the world.

34. She is honoured by Devas, Gandharvas, Ṛṣis, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Daityas.

35. Seeing that benevolent goddess, I rushed here to you. She cannot be won without winning Devas and Gandharvas".

36. Thus informing him, Nārada immediately disappeared.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

The discussion of Mahiṣāsura with his ministers

Varāha said:

1. When Nārada was gone, Mahiṣāsura began to think of the beautiful damsel spoken about by him.

2. Thinking of her, he never got peace of mind. He summoned his chief minister by name Alaṁśarman.

3-4. He had eight ministers who were learned, valiant and just. They were Praghasa, Vighasa, Śaṅkukarṇa, Vibhāvasu, Vidyunmālī, Sumati, Parjanya and Krūra. These were the principal ones. They asked their king to tell them what they should do.

5. Determined to get the damsel mentioned by Nārada, the king told them:

Mahiṣa said:

6. Sage Nārada spoke to me about a young woman. She cannot be obtained without defeating the king of gods.

7-8. You, therefore, consider the matter well and tell me how gods can be defeated and how this woman can be obtained. Please tell me quickly.

9. Thus asked, they began to say. First Praghasa said to him:

10. "O lord, she who was spoken of by Nārada to you, is the supreme power that has assumed the form of the goddess Vaiṣṇavī.

11. A king who desires the wife of his preceptor, the wife of another king or the women in attendance on him, or cohabits with a woman prohibited for him, brings about his own doom.

12. After Praghasa, Vighasa said, "O king, what Praghasa said about that goddess is true.

13. If we all agree, then what should be done by one desirous of success, is to get that virgin goddess in marriage.

14-15. In a matter relating to a virgin, one should not act by oneself. If you all agree to what I say, then let the ministers go to her nearest relative and seek her hand for you.

16. We will first try negotiation failing which we will try to get the approval by gifts. If we still fail we try the method of threat, and finally, if necessary, we will fight.

17. If by all these processes, we fail to achieve our aims, we will march forward and carry her away by force".

18. Vighasa's proposal was gladly approved by all the other ministers. They said:

19. "Vighasa has said now what best we can do in this matter. Let that be done and let us send a messenger now.

20. The messenger should be pure in mind, valiant and learned in polity.

21. We should know from him about her appearance, complexion, valour, might, relations and residence.

22. After knowing all this, we may think of the further action to be taken".

23. The king accepted the suggestion and applauded the minister Vighasa.

24. All of them then considered as to who should be sent as messenger and finally chose Vidyutprabha, who had magical powers, for the purpose.

25. Vighasa then told him: "Be victorious over the army of gods. Mobilise the Rākṣasa army with all its four constituents.

26. O lord of Asuras, when the gods are defeated by you, that damsel will naturally come to you.

27-28. When the guardians of the quarters, Maruts, Nāgas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, are all overcome, you will become Indra.

29. When Indra's harem with numerous women, and the women among Devas and Gandharvas fall to you, she too will certainly do so".

30-31. Thus said, the king ordered the commander-in-chief Virūpākṣa, black like the cloud and collyrium, to get ready the army with the elephants, horses, chariots, and soldiers, in order to defeat gods and Gandharvas.

32. Commanded thus, Virūpākṣa immediately got ready the invincible army.

33. Each Rākṣasa in the army was adequate to defeat one god in battle.

34. Even the chieftains were nine crores in number. Thousands of Rākṣasas constituted the infantry.

35. The entire force was assembled and made to march with a view to defeating the force of gods.

36. With a variety of weapons in hands and with ferocious looks, the soldiers in the army danced in delight and uttered loud cries at the prospect of victory over the gods.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The fight between gods and demons

Varāha said:

1. Then the mighty demon Mahiṣa, who could assume any form at will, started for mountain Meru on an elephant.

2. Reaching Indra's city, he challenged Indra and gods for battle.

3. Taking their weapons and riding on their battle vehicles, the gods accepted the challenge.

4. Then started the exciting battle between great warriors full of war cries from both sides.

5. The (eight) Vasus were attacked by eight Rākṣasas, namely Añjana, Nīlakukṣi, Meghavarṇa, Valāhaka, Udarākṣa, Lalāṭākṣa, Subhūma and Svarbhānu.

6-9. The twelve Ādityas were engaged by twelve Rākṣasas, namely, Bhīma, Dhvāṅkṣa, Dhvastakṣṛṇa, Śaṅkukarṇa, Vajraka, Jyotivīrya, Vidyunmālī, Raktākṣa, Vidyujjihva, Atikāya, Mahākāya and Dīrghabāhū.

10-12. Similarly, the eleven Rudras were to face eleven Rākṣasas by name Kāla, Kṛtānta, Raktākṣa, Haraṇa, Mitrahā, Nala, Yajñahā, Brahmahā, Goghna, Strīghna and Saṁvartaka.

13. The other Rākṣasas engaged the other devas and Mahiṣa himself engaged Indra.

14. Mahiṣa was very valiant and was highly haughty that he could not be killed by any male, because of a boon from Brahmā, be he Śiva himself.

15. Numerous Asuras were killed by Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras. Many in the army of Devas were also killed by the Rākṣasas.

16. In the end Indra was defeated, and the gods, unable to face the piercing weapons, took to their heels.

17. The Asuras reached Brahmaloka and began to harass Devas further.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Death of Mahiṣāsura

Varāha said:

1. Then Vidyutprabha, who was sent as the messenger, reached the place of the goddess where there were hundreds of young women, and said:

Vidyutprabha said:

2. "O goddess, there was a sage named Supārśva who was one among the first of creations.

3. To him was born the valiant and resplendent Sindhudvīpa.

4. He was performing severe penance without food in the city Māhiṣmatī.

5. One day princess Māhiṣmatī of incomparable beauty was moving about playing with her friends.

6. She chanced to reach the valley of the Mandara mountain.

7-8. There she saw the penance-grove of sage Asvara which was full of bowers and trees like Bakula, Lakuca, Candana, Spandana, Sāla and Sarala.

9. Seeing this beautiful hermitage, princess Māhiṣmatī thought.

10. "I shall frighten out this sage from this penance grove and shall myself enjoy here with my friends".

11. Thinking thus, she transformed herself into a buffalo with sharp horns, along with her friends.

12. She then went to the sage to frighten him.

13. When frightened by them, the sage was able to see by his internal eye that she was the Asura princess, and in anger he cursed her.

14. "Since you are frightening me by assuming the form of a buffalo, you be a buffalo itself for a hundred years for your misconduct".

15. Cursed thus, she was shivering with fear, and she fell at his feet with her friends and sought his pardon.

16. He was very much moved and said in mitigation of the curse: "When once you give birth to a son with this form, there will be the end of the curse. My words will never be in vain".

17. Told thus, she went to the bank of river Narmadā where Sindhudvīpa was performing penance.

18. There a young and beautiful Rākṣasa girl by name Indumatī, bathing naked, was seen by this sage.

19. Then he had an emission which he dropped in a stony crevice at the river (and it got mixed with the water).

20. Finding the water fragrant (with it), Māhiṣmatī told her friends that she would drink it. She then drank the water containing the emission of the sage.

21. As a result she conceived and in due time brought forth, a son named Mahiṣa, intelligent and valiant.

22. O goddess, this Mahiṣa who has vanquished the army of gods, now desires to marry you.

23. This great Asura, having subjugated all the three worlds, will give you everything you desire.

24. O goddess, you will be doing a great thing if you offer yourself to him".

25. Told thus by the messenger, the goddess simply laughed and did not utter a word.

26. When she was laughing, he saw in her belly all the three worlds and he became stupefied.

27. Then the doorkeeper of the goddess, by name Jayā, spoke what was in the mind of her mistress.

Jayā said:

28. "You have now spoken seeking the hand of this goddess (for your master). But the vrata she has undertaken is a ceaseless one.

29. There are so many damsels here attending on her. Even one among them is not available to you. Then why speak of the goddess. Therefore, O messenger, please go before something untoward befalls you".

30. The messenger departed. Immediately there appeared sage Nārada from the sky.

31. He quickly prostrated before the virgin goddess, took the seat offered to him and said after bowing to all the others there.

32. "O goddess, I am sent to you by the gods.

33. The gods have been defeated in battle by the asura Mahiṣa, and now he is attempting to capture you.

34. And I have been asked by the gods to tell you that you should be firm in killing him".

35. Soon Nārada disappeared and the goddess ordered her retinue to get ready for battle.

36. Thus ordered, they all took ferocious forms holding sword, shield and arrows, and stood ready for battle to destroy Asuras.

37. Then the entire army of Asuras quickly came away from the army of gods to the place where this army of women was ranged.

38. The women fought with them and soon destroyed their force with all its four divisions.

39. The heads of many were smashed or cut down. The chests of many were broken and goblins were drinking the blood therein.

40. The trunkless heads of many of the Asuras were rolling on the ground.

41. Thus very soon the Asura army was vanquished and the attack now turned towards Mahiṣāsura.

42. Then the whole army raised a cry of fear, and Mahiṣa asked the commander why it was so.

43. The Asura named Yajñahanus, who had assumed the form of an elephant, told him that this was because of the army of women striking ferociously at the Asura force.

44. Mahiṣa then darted forth towards these women to strike them with his mace.

45. He straightaway went to the spot where the goddess worshipped by Devas and Gandharvas was standing.

46-47. Seeing him advance towards her, she assumed a form with twenty hands, holding bow, sword, spear, arrows, trident, club, mace, disc, sling, rod, rope, flag and lotus.[1]

48. The twenty-armed goddess appeared riding on a lion. She then meditated on the fierce Rudra who is the cause of destruction.

49-50. Rudra immediately arrived there. She bowed to him and said that she would gain victory over the Asuras by his mere presence there.

51. Then she defeated all the Asuras except Mahiṣa. Afterwards she darted towards him.

52. When he saw her, Mahiṣa rushed towards her. He alternately fought and fled.

53. He sometimes fought and sometimes withdrew. The fight went on in this manner for ten thousand divine years.

54. The entire universe was realing with fear in the tumult of the battle.

55. Finally in the mountain Śataśṛṅga, he was trodden upon and killed with the trident.

56. His head was cut off with the sword, As he was killed by the goddess, his soul went to heaven.

57. Then Devas led by Brahmā, delighted at the annihilation of Mahiṣa, praised the goddess.

Devas said:

58. Bow to you, O goddess, the great, majestic and fierce,

1. Only thirteen items are mentioned here and not twenty.

victorious, the cause of the existence of the world, three-eyed and omnipresent.

59. Knowledge and nescience, meditation, the object of meditation, the slayer of Mahiṣāsura, present in everything, the lord of all, of universal form, Vaiṣṇavī.

60. Free from fear, permanent, with eyes like the lotus petal, engaged in holy vows, of frightening form.

61. The bestower of prosperity and success, learning and ignorance, immortal, auspicious, the energy of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, prostrated by all gods.

62. Holding the bell in hand, bearing the weapon trident, the destroyer of terrible Mahiṣa, fierce in form, uneven-eyed the great illusion, the exuder of ambrosia.

63. Well disposed towards all beings, the very essence of all beings, the supporter of all beings, the source of all Vidyās, Purāṇas and Śilpas.

64. Bow to you, O mother, you are the repository of all powers and all the secrets of the Vedas.

65. Bow to you, O great goddess, pure, the embodiment of forbearance.

66. We all seek refuge in you, O supreme goddess, as a result of which we never meet with any reverse in battle.

67-68. He who recites this Stotra with devotion escapes from ferocious animals like the tiger, from robbers and from the displeasure of kings, gets release from fetters and lives happily.

Varāha said:

69. Thus extolled by gods, she asked them to seek of her a boon.

The gods said:

70. "The boon we seek is that you may be pleased to fulfil all the desires of those who recite this stotra of yours".

71. Saying 'Let it be so', the goddess sent the gods off and herself remained there.

72. O Earth, he who knows this the second birth of the goddess, becomes free from grief and attains the eternal abode free from all misery.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

The exploits of Raudri

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, listen to the Vrata of Raudrī, representing the power of Tamas, who went to the Nīla mountain for performing penance.

2. With the aim of protecting the world by means of penance for a long time, she resorted to five fires.[1]

3-4. While she was thus performing great penance, there lived in a city rich with gems and full of forests in the midst of the sea, a powerful Asura king named Ruru who had got a boon from Brahmā. He was a source of terror to gods.

5. He was like a second Namuci,[2] and had as his followers crores of Asuras.

6. For a long time he fought against gods with a view to capturing the cities of the deities guarding different quarters.

7. As the great Asura was rising with his army, the water in the sea began to swell and enter the valleys of mountains filling them with crocodiles and big fish.

8. From within that water issued forth the Asura army with variegated weapons and armour.

9. Came out from it big elephants with Asuras seated on them and loudly tinkling with bells tied on them.

10. Crores of horses having white streamers came out with riders seated on golden pedestals.

11. Similarly, came out a ceaseless stream of chariots with good wheels, shaft and poles, fitted with mechanical contrivances, and equalling in speed the chariot of the sun.

12. In the same manner rushed forth the infantry with quivers, bows and arrows, quickly striking at all those that came in the way.

13. After coming out of the waters, they vanquished the gods and darted towards the city of Indra with all the four divisions of the army.

14. The Asura king Ruru fought Devas with fierce club, hammer, rod and arrows.

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1. The five fires are those on the four sides, the fifth being the sun.
2. Namuci was a demon killed by Indra.

15. In the battle,the Asuras inflicted serious injury on Devas and so too Devas on the Asuras. In the end, Devas with their leader Indra were defeated and they ran away.

16. When Devas were thus taking to their heels, Asuras chased them.

17-18. Running in great fear, gods came to Nīla mountain where the goddess Raudrī was doing penance. They understood her to be Kālarātri, the cause of all destruction.

19. Seeing Devas thus fear-stricken, she told them aloud not to be afraid.

The goddess said:

20. O gods, why are you so worried. Tell me the cause of your fear.

The gods said:

21. "O great goddess, protect us from the powerful Ruru, the king of Asuras, who is pursuing us".

22. Told thus by the gods, she of matchless valour, simply laughed a while.

23. As she was laughing, from her mouth arose numerous goddesses of strange forms, and the whole world became covered by them.

24. They were ferocious, with expansive breasts, holding noose, goad, trident, bow and arrows.

25. They remained around the goddess in crores.

26. They soon fought against Asuras and annihilated their entire force.

27. The army of Devas together with the army of Kālarātri fought Asuras and sent them all to Yama's abode.

28. The great demon Ruru alone was left there.

29. He then discharged towards the gods a magical power which made them all fall into a swoon.

30. When Devas were thus in a state of forced sleep, the goddess struck at Ruru with her trident.

31. When he was struck, his trunk (*carma*) and head (*muṇḍa*) got separated from each other.

32. Since the *carma* and *muṇḍa* of the demon Ruru were separated thus, she came to be known as *Cāmuṇḍā*.[1]

33. Because of her terrific form engaged in destruction, she was known as *Kālarātri* (the night of time).

34. Her attendant goddesses are legion and they always stand around her.

35. They all felt extemely hungry and so requested the goddess to give them food.

36. Thus requested, she began to think about food for them, but could not find an immediate solution.

37. She then meditated on Lord Rudra, and as a result the three-eyed god appeared before her.

38. He then asked her to tell him what her desire was.

The goddess said:

39. These mighty attendants of mine are in need of food. Please give them something suitable to eat. Otherwise, O lord, they may be eating me.

Rudra said:

40. "O resplendent Kālarātri, I shall tell you about the food for them. Please listen.

41-42. She who, while in pregnancy, wears the cloth of another woman, or touches a man (other than her husband), let her be (the food) for some of them on earth.

43. Where there are foibles among the ignorant, the occasion may be taken advantage of as an offering for some of them.

44. Others may take advantage of crevices in rooms for child-birth and snatch away the newborn ones.

45. Still others may satisfy their hunger by possessing the bodies of women standing with tears in houses, fields, lakes, tanks and gardens thinking of men (other than their own husbands)".

46-47. Telling the goddess thus and seeing Ruru and his army lying dead, the three-eyed god began to praise her.

Rudra said:

48. "Hail goddess Cāmuṇḍā, hail the snatcher of all beings, hail omniscient Kālarātri, bow to you.

1. Usually the name is taken as due to her killing the two demons, Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa.

49. O you of universal form, the auspicious, pure, three-eyed, fierce, benevolent, the great illusion, the great beginning.

50. Speedy like the mind, victory, the cause of growth, fierce-eyed, settler of all agitation, the great devastation, attractive in body, the lover of dance.

51. Fierce, black-coloured, remover of sins, with noose and and rod in hand, of frightening appearance.

52. Cāmuṇḍā, with flaming mouth, sharp teeth, mighty, sitting in a hundred vehicles, sitting on the dead.

53. Possessed of threatening big eyes, striking terror in all beings, furious.

54. Kāli, Karāli, Kālarātri, bow to you".

55. Thus praised by god Rudra, the great goddess became very much pleased and asked him to seek any boon he wished.

Rudra said:

56. "May you be pleased to grant desires of those who recite this stotra of yours.

57. He who recites this with devotion thrice a day, may attain sons, grandsons, cattle and affluence.

58. He who listens to this account of the Triple power, may he be freed of all sins and made to attain beatitude".

59. Having praised the goddess Cāmuṇḍā thus, lord Rudra disappeared and the gods retired to their abodes.

60. He who knows about the origin of the goddess in this three-fold form, becomes freed from all bondages and attains supreme bliss.

61. A king who has lost his kingdom, regains it free from all troubles, if for one year he worships her fasting on Aṣṭamī, Navamī and Caturdaśī.

62. This Triple power brings success in diplomacy.

63. This great goddess of creation, when white, is of Sāttvic nature and pertains to Brahmā. The same, when red, is of Rājasic nature and is called Vaiṣṇavī (pertaining to Viṣṇu).

64. The same, when black, is of Tāmasic nature and is known as Raudrī (pertaining to Rudra).

65. Just as the same supreme soul manifests itself in three forms (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra), so the same power manifests itself in three different forms based on function.

66. He who listens to the origin of this Triple power, becomes free from all sins and attains the highest bliss.

67. He who listens to the same on the Navamī tithi with great attention, becomes free from fears and attains a kingdom.

68. He who keeps it written in his house, gets it immune from fire, thiefs and snakes.

69. He who worships the book in which it is written, gets the whole world in his favour. He gets children, money, grain, kine and noble women.

70. He who has it in his house, gets jewels, horses, cows, servants, servant maids and all other kinds of wealth.

Varāha said:

71. O Earth, I have now told you about the secret and the greatness of Rudra.

72. Cāmuṇḍā has different forms numbering nine crores. Cāmuṇḍā is the Tamasic power which pertains to Rudra.

73. Vaiṣṇavī has different forms numbering eighteen crores. Vaiṣṇavī is the Rājasic Power of protection which pertains to Viṣṇu.

74. Brāhmī has different forms countless in number.

75. O Earth, to each one of these Śiva creates a form of himself to be their husbands.

76. So Rudra becomes pleased with those who worship them and grants all that they desire.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

The greatness of Rudra

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, now listen to the origin of Rudra Vrata, by knowing which one gets freed from all sins.

2. The red-eyed and tawny-coloured Rudra who was created by Brahmā in his third birth, was borne by him in pleasure on his shoulder.

3-4. When he was thus on the shoulder, the fifth head of Brahmā told Rudra the Ātharvaṇa mantra by which release is obtained.

5. "O Kapālin, Rudra, Babhru, Bhava, Kairāta, Suvrata, my valiant and broad-eyed son, do protect this world".

6. When Rudra was thus addressed by the names which he would be getting in future he was angry at the word 'Kapāla' used and clipped off that (fifth) head.

7. The head was clipped off by the nail in the left thumb, but it got attached to the hand.

8. Having plucked out the head, Rudra, however, spoke to Brahmā in humility.

Rudra said:

9. O lord, please tell me how this cut-off head can be made to fall from my hand and how I can make atonement for this sin.

Brahmā said:

10. "O Rudra, perform the vrata called Kāpālika by your own prowess and following the right Samayācāra."

11. Thus said by Brahmā, Rudra went to the holy mountain Mahendra to make atonement for his sin.

12. Remaining there, Rudra broke that head into three. He separated the hair on the head and with it made his yajño-pavīta.

13. He made a bead of the bones. One part of the skull, full of blood, remained in his hand.

14-15. Another he made into smaller parts and placed them on his matted hair. Then the great god wandered over the whole earth with its seven islands, bathing in the holy Tīrthas every day; first he bathed in the sea and then in the Ganges.

16. He went to river Sarasvatī and then the confluence of the Ganges and Yamunā. He then went to river Śatadru and from there to the great river Devikā.

17. He then bathed in Vitastā, Candrabhāgā, Gomatī, Sindhu, Tuṅgabhadrā, Godāvarī and Gaṇḍakī.

18. He went to the great Śiva temple in Nepal and then to Dāruvana in Kedāra.

19. He visited Bhadreśvara and then the very holy Gayā and there propitiated the Pitṛs.

20. Thus, O Earth, he quickly traversed the whole earth.

21-22. In the sixth year of his wandering, his only dress,

a lion cloth tied to the waist-string, fell down and he became the naked Kāpālika.

23. Wandering again for the next two years from one holy place to another, he attempted to cast off the piece of skull in his hand but could not.

24. For another two years he continued the same but in vain.

25. He then spent one year in the holy Himālaya mountain.

26. For another year also he did the same in great excitement.

27. The next two years Rudra wandered about visiting very ancient holy places.

28. O Earth, in the twelfth year, he went to Vārāṇasī and had his bath there.

29. When he was dipping himself in river Gaṅgā there, Brahmā's skull in his hand released itself.

30. This tīrtha in Gaṅgā, thereafter came to be known as 'Kapālamocana'.

31. Going to the place Harihara and bathing in Devāṅgada and worshipping Someśvara, he went to Cakratīrtha.

32. Bathing there and worshipping the deity Trijaleśvara, he went to Ayodhyā and from there to Vārāṇasī.

33. At the end of twelve years, the skull in his hand was made to fall by the force of the Gaṇas moving in the borders.

34. This place became the holy tīrtha named Kapālamocana.

35. He bathed in the Gaṅgā there, worshipped Viśveśvara and became free from the sin of Brahmahatyā.

36. The tīrtha Kapālamocana is well known in the world, by bathing in which one gets absolved of the sin of killing a Brahmin.[1]

37. Seeing the skull fall, Brahmā arrived there together with Devas, and said:

Brahmā said:

38. "O Rudra, be you the propounder of the righteous path in the world. Since you wandered in the world with *Kapāla*

1. Verses 31 to 36 seem to be an interpolation stating the same matter as in the verses before with the change that the skull was made to fall by the Gaṇas instead of its dropping on its own accord.

(skull) in hand, the Vrata relating to you will be known as *Nagnakāpāla*.

39. Since you attained reddish-brown colour while wandering in the Himālaya, the Vrata will be known as *Bābhravya*.

40. Since you became *Śuddha* (purified) in this place, the Vrata will be *Śuddhaśaiva*, highly purificatory.

41. I will impart the śāstras only to those who duly worship you at first.

42. He who performs these Vratas which you did first, will be absolved of even the sin of killing a Brahmin.

43. The Vratas performed by you as a Nagnakāpāla (naked holding the skull), Bābhravya (as pure Śiva), will be known by the respective names.

44. Following this, those who duly worship you, to them you may impart briefly with the rituals all śāstras, the Pāśupata Śāstra in particular".

45. Told thus by Brahmā, Rudra became extremely pleased, and hailed by Devas, he went to Kailāsa.

46. Brahmā departed with Devas to the celestial world, and then Devas went to their abodes.

Varāha said:

47. I have thus told you about the greatness of Rudra and what he did in this world.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

Mokṣa of Satyatapas[1]

Earth said:

1-2. O lord, you said formerly that there is much that is interesting to be said about Satyatapas, the Brahmin who became a hunter and who saved Āruṇi from a tiger and propitiated Durvāsas and then went to Himālayas.

1. In the text the chapter is named *Parvādhyāya*.

3. I am now very much eager to know this. Be pleased to tell me.

Varāha said:

4. Satyatapas was a Brahmin in the line of Bhṛgu, but because of his association with Dasyus (a cruel uncivilised tribe), himself became one like them.

5. After a long time, by the contact with sages, he became a Brahmin again and got instruction from Durvāsas in particular.

6. On the northern side of mount Himavān there is a holy river called Puṣyabhadrā, on its bank a beautiful slab called Citraśilā and a big banyan tree called Bhadra.

7. There Satyatapas was performing severe penance.

8. Once when he was cutting with his axe sticks (for homa), he happened to cut his left fore finger.

9. At the broken part there were only ashes, neither blood nor flesh nor marrow. He put the broken finger in its place and it got united as before.

10. This wonder was seen by a Kinnara couple that had resorted to the banyan tree Bhadra the previous night.

11. When the couple returned to Indraloka in the morning, they were asked by Indra and Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras there to tell them if there was anything wonderful to be narrated.

12-15. The Kinnara couple then narrated about their being near Rudrasaras, the wonder relating to Satyatapas they saw on the bank of river Puṣyabhadrā, the exudation of ashes from his broken finger and all that.

16-17. Surprised at this, Indra suggested to Viṣṇu that they may go to the place of wonder mentioned by the Kinnara pair on the slopes of the Himālayas.

18. Viṣṇu then transformed himself into a boar and Indra into a hunter, and both went near the sage (Satyatapas).

19. Viṣṇu in the form of the boar appeared within the sight of the sage, alternately revealing and hiding himself.

20. Soon appeared there Indra also (in the guise of the hunter) with bow and arrow in hand and asked sage Satyatapas:

21. "O sage, did you see here a big boar? I want to kill it for the food of my family".

22. Asked thus, the sage began to think: "If I show him the boar now, it will surely be killed by him.

23. If I don't, his family will famish. This hunter with his wife and children, is in great hunger.

24. The boar hit by the arrow has sought refuge in my hermitage. What shall I do?".

25. When thus in a dilemma, a thought occurred to him, and he exclaimed:

26. "The eye is directed to see the moving objects and the tongue is directed to speak to the hunter. There is no eye now to see or the tongue to speak. Does the tongue really have the eye?".

27. Hearing this, both Indra and Viṣṇu were pleased, and showing their genuine forms, offered to grant him a boon.

Hearing this Satyatapas said:

28. "Really there is nothing to be asked, after seeing you both before me here in this earth. I am fully gratified.

29. Still I shall ask: One, when Brahmins honour other Brahmins at the sight of the new moon and full moon with devotion, let their acquired sin disappear in the course of a month.

30. Another, let me attain full liberation".

31. They granted him both the boons asked for and disappeared. Satyatapas too felt in his heart to have become one with Brahman.

32. While the sage was thus remaining there fully gratified, his guru Āruṇi came there after going round the world visiting the holy spots.

33. In great devotion he honoured the Guru with a seat, Pādya, Ācamana and Godāna.

34. Āruṇi then spoke to him, seeing him full of humility and freed from all sins.

Āruṇi said:

35. "You have achieved in full the aim of penance and you have now become Brahman. Now it is the time for your liberation along with me,

36. Arise, my son, we shall go to the supreme Abode, after reaching which there will be no rebirth".

37. Then both of them, Satyatapas and Āruni, meditated on Lord Nārāyaṇa and became merged in him.

38. He who listens to this Parvādhyāya in full or reads it to others, attains all that he desires.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Greatness of Tiladhenu[1]

Earth said:

1. She who is Māyā and arose out of the body of Brahmā who was born of Avyakta, became the eight-armed Gāyatrī and fought Caitrāsura.

2. The same goddess became Nandā to achieve the purpose of Devas. Then she became Vaiṣṇavī at the instance of Brahmā for killing Mahiṣāsura. Be pleased to tell me how all this was done.

Varāha said:

3. She is the goddess Gaṅgā very much loved by Lord Śiva. Being given his own abode, she is omniscient.

4. In Svāyambhuva (time), she killed as Vaiṣṇavī in the Mandara mountain the demon Mahiṣa.

5. Then in the Vindhya as Nandā, the demon Caitra was killed.

6. Or (it may also be understood) she is the power of knowledge and Mahiṣa the embodiment of ignorance. Doubtless, ignorance is to be overcome by knowledge.

7. For the embodied form we get the story. For the abstract form the place is the heart itself. This is proclaimed by Vedic statements and established by the exponents of the Vedas.

8. Now listen, O Earth, to the propitiation of Viṣṇu, the greatest of gods, as a result of which the five great sins are destroyed and sons and wealth are acquired.

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1. **Hollow metal cow filled with sesamum.**

9. And he who is oppressed by poverty and diseases like leprosy and is issueless, attains quickly prosperity, long and healthy life and children.

10. He who sees Lord Nārāyaṇa with goddess Lakṣmī in the maṇḍala with due rites.

11. The lord who is self-born and is the embodiment of mantra, as directed by the priest.

12. During all Dvādaśī days, particularly on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Kārttika.

13. Or during the change of month or solar and lunar eclipses.

14. To him occurs great happiness, dissolution of all sins, and other deities also get propitiated.

15. The priest should test for one year whoever approaches him, be he Brahmin, Kṣatriya or Vaiśya, as to his conduct and eligibility as true devotee.

16. The devotee should also treat the priest with the same constant devotion as for Viṣṇu.

17. At the end of the year he should propitiate the priest saying.

18. "O worthy lord, I desire by your grace all prosperity in this world and then to cross this ocean of worldly existence".

19. Thus should he worship the Guru taking him to be Lord Viṣṇu before him.

20. Thus worshipped, the Guru should on the Daśamī day in the month of Kārttika, get him clean the teeth with mantras using the twig of a sappy tree and sleep near the deity.

21. He will see dreams and he should tell them to the Guru, who will then know whether it augurs well or ill.

22. On the Ekādaśī day the devotee should fast and go to the temple after bath.

23. Then Guru should prepare the maṇḍala on the floor according to prescription and draw there the cakra Ṣoḍaśāra, Sarvatobhadra or Aṣṭapatra[1] and ask the devotee to see it.

24. Then he should cover the eyes of the devotees with white cloth and ask them to enter the place of worship in the order of their Varṇa (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya).

1. These are diagrams of different kinds to be drawn on the floor according to specifications.

25. The maṇḍala Navanābha should then be arranged with different colours.

26. Then worship should be done for the Dikpālas in their respective positions in the maṇḍala, Indra in the east, Agni in the south-east.

27. Yama in the south, Nirṛti in the south-west, Varuṇa in the west, Vāyu in the south-west.

28. Kubera in the north and Īśāna in the north-east.

29. At the centre of the *Padma* (lotus in the middle of the diagram), worship should be done to the great lord Viṣṇu.

30. In the petal on the east of the Padma, worship should be offered to Balabhadra, in the one on the south to Pradyumna, in the one on the west to Aniruddha and in the one on the north to Vāsudeva, the destroyer of all sins.

31. (Of the four objects in the hands of Viṣṇu) the conch should be placed on the north-east, the disc on the south-east, the club on the north-west and the lotus on the south-west.

32. In the north-east, again, may be placed the mace (*musala*). Garuḍa should be on the right and Lakṣmī on the left of the lord.

33. The bow and the sword are to be placed in front, special position is to be given for Śrīvatsa (the mark on Viṣṇu's body) and Kaustubha (the jewel he wears).

34. After performing worship to lord Janārdana in this way, in the petals in the diagram on the eight directions, a pot each filled with water should be placed. A ninth pot pertaining to Viṣṇu also should be placed (in the middle).

35. The water in the pot pertaining to Viṣṇu should be poured on the devotee desirous of mokṣa.

36. The water in the pot pertaining to Indra (the one placed on the east) should be poured on him who is desirous of prosperity and the same in the one pertaining to Agni (the one placed on north-ẹast) on him who is desirous of great fame.

37. The water in the pot pertaining to Yama (the one placed on the South) should be poured on the devotee desirous of long life, and the same on the one relating to Nirṛti (placed on the south-west) on him who desires the annihilation of the wicked.

38. The water in the pot pertaining to Varuṇa (the one placed on the west) should be poured on him who is desirous of tranquility and the same on the one relating to Vāyu (the one

placed on the north-west) on him who desires the destruction of his sins. The water in the pot pertaining to Kubera (the one placed on the north)should be poured on him who desires wealth.

39. The water in the pot pertaining to Īśāna (the one placed on the north-west) should be poured on him who desires knowledge or kingship.

40. Even when bathed in the water of one of these, one becomes free from sins, acquires profound knowledge and attains great skill. What then, when he is bathed in all the nine? All his sins disappear, he becomes equal to Viṣṇu and becomes a king.

41. The Guru may also perform worship to the guardian deities of different directions (Indra and others) one after another in the respective spots.

42. And then lead there the blind-folded devotees and make them circumambulate the maṇḍala.

43. The rituals relating to Varuṇa, Vāyu and Soma should then be performed and the order of propitiation should be told.

44. Namely, high Brahmins, Vedas, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Rudra, Āditya, Agni, the lokapālas (deities guarding the eight directions), the planets, preceptor, Vaiṣṇavas and the devotee who has taken the vow.

45. Then the homa should be performed with the mantra *Om namo Bhagavate sarvarūpiṇe huṁ phaṭ svāhā.*

46. Homa should be made in the blazing fire with the (above) Ṣodaśākṣara mantra, and rituals like Garbhādhāna should be done.

47. The offering should be made thrice in fire in front of the deity. At the end of the homa, the devotee who has undertaken the vow should give dakṣiṇā to the Guru.

48. A king may give as dakṣiṇā elephants, horses, jewels, gold and land; others according to capacity.

49. O Earth, the merit attained by this cannot be described even for a hundred years.

50. If the person with the vow listens to Varāha, it is equivalent to reciting the Vedas, Purāṇas and mantras.

51-52. He gets double the merit of reciting them at Puṣkara tīrtha, Prayāga, Kurukṣetra or Vārāṇasī or during eclipses or Viṣu.

53. Even Devas perform penance and meditation, and wonder when they will be born in Bhāratavarṣa.

54. Become devotees with vow, listen to Varāha, and leaving the body with its sixteen elements.

55. Reach the position from which there is no return. They think so and say the same.

56. An old story is illustrated in this connection in the form of conversation between Vasiṣṭha and Śveta.

57. In the region Ilāvṛta there lived a highly saintly king named Śveta.

58. He wished to gift away all his verduous land and consulted sage Vasiṣṭha on the matter.

59. "O great sage, I wish to give away the entire continent of mine to Brahmins. Please permit me". Vasiṣṭha told the king.

60. "O king, give them food conducive to all times. If food is given, what does become not given?

61. The gift of food is superior to all other gifts. All beings arise from food, and they all grow by food.

62. Therefore, O king, resort to giving food". The king, however, did not follow the advice of Vasiṣṭha.

63. He called Brahmins and gave them gems, cloth, ornaments and fine urban land with money.

64. He even gave them majestic elephants. After this, once having conquered the whole earth, he called his family priest Vasiṣṭha again and told him:

65. "O great sage, I wish to perform a hundred Aśvamedha sacrifices".

66. He then performed the sacrifice and gave the Brahmins gold, silver and copper but not food or drink thinking it to be an insignificant thing.

67. O Earth, this affluent king, in due course, became dead.

68. In the world beyond, he became oppressed by hunger, and thirst in particular.

69-70. He went to the mountain Śveta and from there collected from the place where his mortal body was cremated, all the bones and began to lick them.

71. He then got into his aerial car and returned to heaven. (He used to do this quite often).

72. After a long time, the king was seen thus licking the bones by sage Vasiṣṭha. The sage asked him why he was feeding on his own bones.

73. Thus asked by Vasiṣṭha, king Śveta replied.

74. "O sage, I am hungry and as I have not gifted food or drink, so hunger and thirst overpower me".

75. Told thus by the king, Vasiṣṭha addressed him again.

76. "What can I do for you, particularly now that you are hungry. What is not given never serves any one at any time.

77. By giving gold and gems, one enjoys pleasures. But by giving food and drink, one attains everything.

78. That was not given by you, being under the impression that it was a trifle.

Śveta said:

79. Please tell me how I can attain its fruit, although I have not given food. I request you most earnestly.

Vasiṣṭha said:

80. There is one way to attain it. I shall tell you that. Please listen.

81. In days of yore, there was a famous king named Vinītāśva. He began a great sacrifice called Sarvamedha.

82. During the sacrifice, he gave to the Brahmins cows, elephants and money, but not food, just as you did.

83. After a long time he died in river Gaṅgā and because of the great merit he had acquired, he went to heaven as you too did.

84-85. He too became very much hungry in the same manner and went to the Nīla mountain on the bank of the river Gaṅgā, in a resplendant aerial car and saw there his own body.

86. He also saw there on the bank of Gaṅgā his priest and asked him the cause of his hunger (and the means to overcome it).

87-88. The priest asked him to quickly make gifts of Tiladhenu, Jaladhenu, Ghṛtadhenu and Rasadhenu so that he may be rid of his extreme hunger.[1]

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1. These are models of cows with sesamum, water, clarified butter and sugarcane juice inside.

89. The effect will last as long as the sun and moon are in the sky".

The king then asked him again:

Vinītāśva said:

90. O Brahmin, tell me how Tiladhenu (cow of sesamum) is to be given so that I may peacefully enjoy heaven.

The priest said:

91. Listen to me. I shall tell you how Tiladhenu is to be given.

92. Four Kuḍavas make one Prastha. The cow should be of sixteen prasthas and the calf of four prasthas. The nose should be of sandal and the tongue of gur.

93. The tail should be adorned with bells and the horns should be made of gold.

94. The body should be of bronze and hoofs of silver. As is the cow (so should be the calf). This should be then given to the Brahmin.

95. On its back should be placed antelope's skin and the rope should be adorned with gems.

96. The gift should be made with mantra and with herbs uttering.

97. "May I get food, may I get water good, O cow of sesamum given to the Brahmin, I hold you with devotion for the sake of my family. I bow to you, may you be pleased to grant my desire".

98. Give away Tiladhenu in this way. I fulfil all your desires.

99. He who listens to this intently or makes the gift or makes one give such a gift, gets freed of all sins and reaches the abode of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Greatness of Jaladhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about Jaladhenu. On a holy day clean the floor of the size of a cow's skin with cowdung.

2. In its middle, place a pot full of water with perfumes, camphor and sandal paste.

3. Consider that as the cow and another full of water as the calf.

4. Place on all sides the tender sprouts of Dūrvā grass and duly decorate with garlands.

5. Put on the pot fine gems and different kinds of fine fragrance.

6. Place also different kinds of grain on all sides.

7. Place four vessels on the four sides respectively filled with ghee, curd, honey and gur.

8. The face should be of gold, horns of lead and eyes of pearl.

9. The back should be of copper and (the rest of) the body of bronze and hairs to be of darbha. The tail should be of strings with black bells.

10. There should be garlands on the neck, gur on the face and teeth should be of seashells. The tongue should be of strings with black bells.

11. The feet should be of Sugarcane with sandalpaste and flower. Cover it then with cloth and place it on an antelope's skin. Then give it to a Brahmin after giving him sandalpaste and flowers.

12-13. The person to whom it is given should be good, learned in Veda, one with a family and devoted to duty.

14. He who gives the gift, sees it or hears about it and he who receives it, all get freed of their sins.

15. Even those who have the sin of killing a Brahmin, father or cow, or of drinking liquor or of adultery with his teacher's wife, get absolved of it and go to Viṣṇu's abode.

16. The performer of an Aśvamedha with all gifts and dakṣiṇas and the giver of a Jaladhenu are equals.

17. The giver of Jaladhenu may live on water alone for a day and the receiver in the same manner for three days.

18. The giver of Jaladhenu goes to the place where rivers are full of milk and ponds are full of honey and where always swells the music of the Apsarases.

19. He who gives Jaladhenu, he who causes it to be given and he who receives it, all get merged in Viṣṇu.

20. He who speaks about the greatness of the gift of Jaladhenu and he who listens to it go to heaven, getting rid of all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ONE

Greatness of Rasadhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about the rules of the gift of Rasa dhenu in brief.

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place an antelope's skin covered with kuśa grass and over it a pot filled with sugarcane juice (and also the metal cow) and a calf of one-fourth its size on its side.

3. Its feet should be of sugarcane sticks and hoofs should be of silver.

4-5. The horns should be of gold, the tail of cloth, the udder of butter, the face and tongue of gur.

6. The teeth should be of fruits and back made of copper, the hairs of flower and eyes of pearl. It should be well decorated and scented with sandal paste.

7. Seven (different kinds of) cereals should be placed near it and lamps lit on the four sides.

8. Four vessels filled with sesamum should be placed one on each side.

9. The person desirous of heaven should make the gift of Rasadhenu.

10. The giver and the recipient attain the result of drinking the sacrificial soma juice if they fast for a day before the gift.

11. Those who see the gift being made also attain salvation.

12. With the mantras stated before, the donor should pray and then give it to the recipient.

13. Besides himself he leads to a permanent position in heaven ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors.

14. Thus I have told you, O king, about Rasadhenu. Follow it and attain supreme bliss.

15. He who reads this account every day or listens to it in reverence, goes to the world of Viṣṇu, being freed of all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWO

The greatness of Guḍadhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about Guḍadhenu, the gift of which accomplishes all desires and endows wealth.

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place an antelope's skin covered with kuśa grass. Spread a cloth on it and place in it the cow made of gur along with the calf and a bronze milking vessel.

3. The face should be of gold and teeth of pearls. The neck should be full of gems and nose of sandal paste.

4. The horns are to be of Agaru sticks and the back of copper. The tail is to be of silk and well decorated.

5. The feet are to be of sugarcane and hoofs of silver. A velvet cloth is to be put on it and fitted with bells.

6. The ears are to be of brass and the udder to be of butter. Different kinds of fruits are to be placed all around.

7. The best Guḍadhenu is one which is four ādhāras (in weight), its calf may be half or one-fourth its weight.

8. The medium is the one with half its weight and the inferior is the one with a quarter of the weight. The poor may have it of the size according to capacity.

9. Then according to means, worship should be performed to this, as also for the Brahmin to whom it is to be given.

10. This is to be done with sandal paste, flowers, ghee and other offerings and lamp.

11. It should be given to a Vedic Brahmin, preferably one who has performed sacrifices, with a hundred pieces of gold, or half or even a quarter of it.

12. And in the absence of capacity even for that, with a hundred or fifty, together with ear-rings, umbrella and footwear.

13. And then should be uttered the mantra: "O virile Guḍadhenu, the bestower of all prosperity, be pleased to provide me with food and drink as a result of this dāna".

14. The mantras cited before may also be recited.

15. The giver should face east while giving it to the Brahmin.

16. The gift of such a cow is proclaimed to be efficacious in removing the sins committed through thought, word or deed and of all that is false.

17. Those who witness the gift of such a cow attain salvation. The rivers in that place flow with milk and marshes produce ghee. The sages and Siddhas flock there.

18. The giver takes himself and those in the past ten and future ten generations in his family to the world of Viṣṇu.

19. For this dāna the equinoxes, solstices and the new moon and full moon days are particularly meritorious.

20. The gift should be made only to a deserving person and with full sincerity.

21. It then fulfils all wishes, removes all sins, provides enjoyment and finally liberation.

22. By the blessing of Guḍadhenu one enjoys all prosperity, good health and long life.

23. All adversity is overcome and the abode of Viṣṇu is attained.

24. Never does he, at any time, meet with any distress or discomfort.

25. He who recites this or listens to this or advises others on its basis, lives in this world with all happiness and in the world beyond for long honoured by the gods.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

Greatness of Śarkarādhenu

The priest said:

1. Listen, O king, similarly to the account about Śarkarādhenu (cow of sugarcandy).

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place antelope's skin and over it kuśa grass and then cow made of sugarcandy.

3. The best is one made of four weights of sugarcandy and its calf of one-fourth the quantity; the medium is one of half this quantity and the inferior one of a single unit of weight. In all cases the calf is to be of one-fourth the weight of the cow.

4. (The money to go with it) may be above one hundred and eight, but it may also be according to one's capacity and without straining oneself.

5. Cereals of different kinds should be placed on all the four sides.

6. The face and horns should be of gold, eyes of pearls and tongue of flour. The face should be smeared with sugar.

7. Round the neck should be a silken band. The feet should be of sugarcane, the hoofs of silver and udder of butter.

8. The ears should be of grass. The cow should be adorned with five gems and white chowries and cloth should be thrown over it.

9. It should then be decorated with sandalpaste and flowers and given to a poor, good and intelligent Brahmin with a family.

10. It should not be given to one who is bad or jealous.

11. Solstices, equinoxes and other holy days are particularly good for this dāna.

12. It is particularly good if it is given to a deserving Vedic Brahmin who happens to come to the house.

13. The gift should be made facing east or north and keeping the cow faced east and holding its tail, and the calf on its northern side.

14. The mantras prescribed for the gift should be recited and the Brahmin to whom it is to be given should be honoured with ear-rings.

15. In his hand should be placed sandalpaste and flowers and dakṣiṇā according to one's means.

16. Without looking at his face, the gift of the cow should be made. The giver may live on sugarcandy for one day and the recipient for three days.

17. The cow is the remover of all sins and bestower of all that is wished for. So one who gifts it attains all desires.

18. Those who see the gift being made, also attain salvation.

19. He who listens to this or reads this becomes purified of all sins and attains the abode of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR

The greatness of Madhudhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about Madhudhenu (cow of honey) which removes all sins.

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) and on which is placed antelope's skin with kuśa grass spread over it, the cow of honey made with sixteen pots of it and the calf of a fourth of its size should be placed.

3. The face should be of gold and the horns of Agaru. The back should be of copper and dewlap of bands of silk.

4. The feet should be of sugarcane covered with white velvet. Gur should be smeared on the face and sugar on the tongue.

5. The hips should be of flowers and the teeth of fruits. The hairs should be of darbha grass and the hoofs of silver.

6. The ears should be of brass. Seven cereals should be spread all round in the prescribed manner and measure.

7. Four vessels of sesamum should be placed, one on each side. The cow should then be adorned with a pair of cloths and jewels on the neck.

8. A bronze milking vessel is also to be placed. Worship should then be done with sandalpaste and flowers.

9. It may be gifted to a deserving Brahmin at any time, but the solstices, equinoxes, change of month and eclipses are particularly sacred.

10. The Madhudhenu is to be given to a poor Vedic Brahmin who has performed sacrifices and is born in the region Āryāvarta.

11. The gift is to be made with water and dakṣiṇā, uttering the mantras and holding the cow by its tail.

12. This cow pleases all gods and is for the well-being of all.

13. It is to be given to the Brahmin saying, "O Madhudhenu, I bow to you; may all my ancestors be pleased.

14. I bow to you again; I hold you, O yielder of wishes, for the sake of my family."

15. After the cow, umbrella and footwear also should be given.

16. After giving the cow, the giver may live on milk and honey for a day and the recipient similarly for three days.

17. Now listen to the good that arises out of it.

18. In the place where this gift is made, rivers flow with honey and marshes turn into pāyasa. Sages and Siddhas flock there.

19. The giver enjoys all pleasures in this world and goes to the world of Brahmā. After living there long, he returns to the earth.

20. Then he enjoys pleasures in abundance and goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

21. In addition for himself, he acquires union with Viṣṇu for ten past generations and ten future generations in his family.

22. He who listens to this or recites to others gets free from all sins and goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE

The greatness of Kṣīradhenu

The priest said:

1. Listen, O king, I shall tell you about Kṣīradhenu (cow of milk) now.

2. On the floor smeared with cowdung over an area of a cow's hide, spread Kuśa grass over a black antelope's skin.

3. Place on it a small heap of cowdung and over it a pot full of milk, and another, a fourth of its size, to represent the calf.

4. The face is to be of gold, the horns of sandalwood or Agaru, ears to be of brass.

5. The mouth is to be of gur, tongue of sugar, teeth of white seeds and eyes of pearl.

6. The feet are to be of sugarcane, the hairs to be of darbha grass. A white velvet is to be thrown over it. The back is to be of copper and the rest of the body of bronze and tail of silken threads.

7. The udder is to be of butter, the hoofs to be of silver and the five gems.

8. Vessels of sesamum are to be placed on the four sides and those containing seven grains all around.

9. The Kṣīradhenu is to be arranged like this, and it should be covered with a pair of cloths and worshipped with sandal-paste, flower, dhūpa, dīpa etc.

10. Then it should be given away to a Brahmin together with clothes, ear-rings, footwear and Umbrella.

11. Reciting the mantras *āpyāyasva* etc. and *āśrayaḥ sarva-bhūtānām* etc.

12. The mantra *āpyāyasva* etc., is also for propitiating the Kṣīradhenu. The other mantra is to be recited by the recipient also.

13. This is the rule about this gift. Those who see the gift being made also reach heaven.

14. O king, listen to the benefit of making the gift with a thousand gold coins or a hundred ones or even according to capacity.

15. He who does this remains in the world of Indra for sixty thousand years.

16. He then goes to the world of Brahmā with his departed ancestors and enjoys there for a long time.

17. Anointed with fine perfume and wearing divine garlands, he ascends an aerial car and goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

18. Which is resplendent like the twelve suns and where swells the vocal and instrumental music and where dance the Apsarases. Living there long he finally becomes one with Viṣṇu.

19. O king, he who listens to this or recites this with devotion, gets rid of all sins and goes to the world of Viṣṇu

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIX

The greatness of Dadhidhenu

The priest said:

1. O king, now listen to the rules of gifts of Dadhidhenu (cow of curd).

2. On the floor smeared with cowdung over the area of a cow's hide and strewn with flowers, spread kuśa grass over an antelope's skin.

3. Then spread the seven cereals and install a pot of curd, and another, a fourth of its size, to represent the calf.

4. Place on it a pair of clothes and then perform worship with flowers and sandal paste.

5. Give it away to a good-natured Brahmin from a good family and endowed with qualities like patience and the like, holding it by the tail.

6. And giving along with it coins, ear-rings, footwear and umbrella and uttering the mantra *dadhikrāvṇo* etc.

7. The giver of Dadhidhenu may live on curd alone for a day and the recipient in the same manner for three days.

8. Those who see the giving away of Dadhidhenu also attain salvation.

9. He who listens to this or recites it for others, gets the result equivalent to Aśvamedha sacrifice and goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN

The greatness of Navanītadhenu

The priest said:

1. O king, now listen to the rules relating to Navanītadhenu (cow of butter) by which one gets freed from all sins.

2. On the floor smeared with cowdung for an area of a cow's hide, spread a black antelope's skin.

3. Place on it a pot containing butter of the measure of one prastha, and another, a fourth of its size, to represent the calf on its northern side.

4. The cow should have horns of gold, eyes of pearl, tongue of gur.

5. Lips of flower, teeth of seeds, dewlap of white threads.

6. Udder of butter, feet of sugarcane, back of copper, hoofs of silver and hair of darbha grass.

7. Four pots of sesamum are to be placed, one on each side.

8. Place a pair of clothes on it, decorate it with sandalpaste and flowers, kindle lamps on all sides and then give it away to a Brahmin.

9. The mantras stated for the other Dhenus, should be recited here also, (and in addition).

10. "When the ocean was churned by devas and asuras, the divine ambrosia that arose is this butter. I bow to you, O butter, the elixir of all beings."

11. Uttering this, the cow should be given to a Brahmiṇ with a family to support, and he should take it to his house.

12. The giver may live on butter for one day and the recipient similarly for three days.

13. He who witnesses the gift of Dadhidhenu gets free from all sins and becomes merged in Śiva.

14. He remains in the world of Viṣṇu with his ancestors as well as descendants till the end of the world.

15. He who intently listens to this or recites it to others, becomes purified and remains in the world of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT

The greatness of Lavaṇadhenu

The priest said:

1. O king, now listen to the rules relating to Lavaṇadhenu (cow of salt).

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung), spread kuśa grass over an antelope's skin and place on it a cow made of salt of the measure of sixteen prasthas, and a calf a fourth of its size.

3. The feet are to be of sugarcane, face and horns of gold, hoofs of silver.

4. The mouth to be of gur, teeth of fruits, tongue of sugar, nose of sandalpaste, eyes of jewels and ears of leaves, abdomen of sugarcandy and udder of butter.

5. The tail of silken threads, back of copper, hair of darbha and the milking vessel of bronze. It should be decorated with bells and jewels.

6. Worship should be performed with sandalpaste, flowers and incense. A pair of cloths should be placed on it and the whole thing gifted to a Brahmin.

7. This gift may be made at any time if it is to ward off evil effects of planets or stars. But eclipses, change of month and solstices are special occasions for it.

8-9. The recipient should be a Brahmin who is well-versed in Vedas, is of good conduct and of a good family.

10-11. This should be done along with a pair of cloths, gift and a woolen shawl and gold according to one's ability.

12. Holding the tail and according to the prescription laid down before.

13-15. The (special) mantra should be uttered "O Brahmin, I bow to you; receive this cow adored by all gods, who knows the tastes of all beings and who is veritably Rudra. O goddess, I bow to you; fulfil all my desires".

16. Such a gift with a thousand or hundred gold pieces, leads one to the heaven of Śiva.

17. He who listens to this intently or recites for others, is removed from all sins and goes to the world of Rudra.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINE

The greatness of Kārpāsadhenu

The priest said:

1. O king, I shall now tell you about the Kārpāsadhenu (cow of cotton) the giving of which leads one to the world of Indra.

2. (This is particularly effective when performed, during equinoxes and solstices and the beginning of the year, and also when the planets are unfavourable or when calamity is foreboden by dreams.

3. Its proper place, O king, is a temple, other sacred spots or where there is a herd of cows.

4. On the floor smeared with cowdung, spread darbha grass and sesamum and place on it the cow (made of cotton) adorned with cloths and sandalpaste and perform worship with incense, lamp and sweets.

5. The best (cow) is the one weighing four bhāras, the medium is the one weighing just half of it and the inferior the one weighing a quarter, but the weight need not be insisted on.

6. The calf should be of one-fourth the weight of the cow.

7. The horns should be of gold, the hoofs of silver, the teeth of different fruits and gems.

8. Then the cow should be invoked with full concentration of mind and gifted to a brahmin with full sincerity.

9. This should be done according to the prescriptions formerly given and with the mantra:

10. "The multitude of Devas will not be there without you. O goddess, raise me up out of this ocean of saṁsāra and protect me."

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1. One *bhāra* is equivalent to 2000 *palas*.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

The greatness of Dhānyadhenu

The priest said:

1. O king, listen. I shall tell you about Dhānyadhenu (cow of grain) by the very mention of which goddess Pārvatī gets pleased.

2. One gets absolved of all sins, like the moon becoming free from the clutches of Rāhu, by performing it during equinoxes, solstices and in the month of Kārttika.

3. The gift of Dhānyadhenu brings about the merit equal to that of ten cows.

4. As in the earlier cases, worship is to be done on the floor smeared with cowdung and covered with antelope's skin.

5. The best (Dhānyadhenu) is the one made of four droṇas of grain, the medium the one made of just half of it. But the quantity need not be insisted upon.

6. The calf should be one-fourth of the cow.

7. The horns should be of gold and the hoofs of silver. The nose should be of 'gomeda' gem or of Agaru or sandalwood.

8. The teeth should be of pearl and mouth of curd and honey. The ears are to be of leaves and the milking vessel of bronze.

9. The feet are to be of sugarcane and tail of silk. There should also be a variety of fruits and gems.

10. The rules are as before, and after performing worship it should be given to a Brahmin together with footwear and umbrella.

11. At the auspicious time, the giver should bathe, dress himself in white cloth, circumambulate the Brahmin thrice and prostrate before him.

12. He should then utter: "O brahmin learned in the Vedas, be pleased to receive this gift so that the great lord Viṣṇu may be pleased.

13-15. Lakṣmī is associated with Viṣṇu, Svāhā with Agni, Śacī with Indra, Gaurī with Śiva, Gāyatrī with Brahmā, Jyotsnā (moonlight) with Candra, Prabhā (lustre) with Sūrya, Buddhi

(intellect) with Bṛhaspati and Medhā (intelligence) with Munis (sages). But O goddess (cow), all these remain in you".

16. Saying this, the offering should be made to the Brahmin. He should then be circumabulated and his pardon sought for any lapses unknowingly made.

17. The benefit acquired by the gift of Dhānyadhenu is equivalent to the acquisition of the entire earth with all its gems.

18. Therefore, O king, the gift of Dhānyadhenu should be made as it gives enjoyment and release.

19. It gives prosperity, longevity and health in this life, and a place in the world of Śiva, taken there in a brilliant aerial car attended on by Apsarases.

20. He stays there till he thinks of birth when he comes to earth as the lord of Jambūdvīpa.

21. O king, he who listens to this, becomes freed from all sins, goes to the world of Rudra and is honoured there.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN

The greatness of Kapilādhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about the most important Kapilā dhenu (the brown cow), the giver of which attains the world of Viṣṇu.

2. Following the prescriptions given before, give the (brown coloured) cow along with the calf, well decorated and provided with gems.

3. All the holy places in the world are contained in the head and neck of the brown cow, as ordained by Brahmā.

4-5. He who sprinkles on his head early morning the water poured on the head and neck of the brown cow, burns away all his sins accrued during thirty years, like fire burning away faggots.

6. Circumambulating such a cow is equivalent to circumambulating the whole earth.

7. He who circumambulates it even once, burns away sins acquired in ten births.

8. He who bathes in the urine of the brown cow gets merit equal to that of bathing in Ganges.

9. Bathing in it once, removes sins acquired during the whole life.

10. Lord Brahmā has declared that giving away one brown cow is equivalent to giving away hundred other cows.

11. Even the smell of burning bones of a dead cow is a purifier.

12. Caressing the cow and actually rearing it give the benefit of making the gift of a hundred cows for the cure of ailments.

13. He who gives to a hungry cow grass and water every day gets the merit of performing a Gomedha sacrifice.

14. He gets many aerial cars and is attended on by celestial damsels like so many brilliantly glowing lamps.

15. The different colours of the 'brown cow' species are, first golden brown, second yellowish brown, third rosy red, fourth gurlike brown.

16. Fifth variegated colour, sixth whitish yellow, seventh whitish brown, eighth blackish brown.

17. Ninth reddish brown, tenth tawny in tail, eleventh white in hoof.

18. Such cows with good features and well decorated should be given to a Brahmin. That brings about enjoyment here and liberation hereafter.

19. Giving enjoyment and liberation, it leads one to the path of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE

The greatness of cow at childbirth, list of Purāṇas

The priest said:

1. O king, listen to the account of the double-faced cow (the cow just giving birth to the young one) narrated to the Earth in days of yore. This produces great merit.

Earth said:

2. What are the characteristics of the sacred cow referred to as Kapilā created by you in connection with sacrifice?

3. How many varieties of it are distinguished by Brahmā ?

4. O Mādhava, what merit accrues by the gift of a cow in the process of childbirth? I wish to know all this in detail.

Varāha said:

5. O goddess, know the truth about it, sacred and removing all sins, by hearing which one certainly becomes free from all acquired sins.

6. The Kapilā (brown cow) is for Agnihotra and other sacrifices. It was made by Brahmā out of all effulgence.

7. The Kapilā is the holiest of the holy and the most auspicious. It gives important merit.

8. It is the best of all penances, the foremost of all vows, the most important among gifts and the most imperishable of all wealth.

9. It is equivalent to all holy spots in the world and all temples accessible as well as inaccessible.

10. The Brahmins should perform Agnihotra morning and evening with the ghee, curd and milk of Kapilā.

11. They are used with great devotion in Agnihotra, in the offerings with mantras and in hospitality for guests.

12. Those who do so move in aerial cars dazzling like the sun.

13. The Kapilā with its several varieties was made by Brahmā from out of the middle part of the solar globe. Its eyes are brownish yellow. It provides happiness, success and intelligence.

14. All the varieties of Kapilā mentioned before, if they have the right characteristics, are great indeed, and they lead to liberation.

15. In confluences they are particularly efficacious. They have Agni in their tail and face and have complexion like the fire and hence called Āgnāyī.

16. One who receives Kapilā as a gift from a Śūdra should be considered as most lowly like a Caṇḍāla.

17. Therefore let not a Brahmin receive the offering from Śūdras. They are to be kept far away like dogs during sacrifices.

18. They are discarded by the manes during new moon and full moon. They should not be spoken to and nothing should be received from them because they do only sinful deeds.

19. Those (Śūdras) who drink (the milk of) Kapilā make their forefathers eat the filth in the earth for long.

20. Note what happens to the Śūdras who feed on the milk, ghee and butter of the Kapilā cows.

21. They go to the terrible hell called Raurava.

22. After living there for a hundred crores of years, they are born as dogs.

23. After the life as dogs, they become faecus-eating worms stinking deep. They are born again and again there and never get release.

24. Once a Brahmin receives a gift from a Śūdra, his ancestral manes fall into filth.

25. No other Brahmin shall speak with him or share a seat with him. He is to be kept afar.

26. The Brahmin who, however, chances to speak with him or share a seat, shall perform Prājāpatyakṛcchra ceremony for purification.

27-28. The aim is achieved by the thousandth part (of the merit) of the dāna of a single cow. Why then speak of the numerous other gifts?

29. The parturient cow should be gifted to a poor, good-natured Vedic Brahmin.

30. The cow in the condition of the young one just coming out of its womb is to be considered as earth itself.

31. Those who make the gift of Kapilā remain in the Brahmaloka honoured there for as many crores of years as there are hairs in the cow and its calf.

32. Make horns of gold and hoofs of silver, or place gold and silver in the hand of the Brahmin.

33. And place the tail of the Kapilā on his hand pouring water and uttering clearly (the mantras).

34. This gift becomes certainly equivalent to the gift of the whole earth full of gems and mountains and forests and oceans.

35. By this gift, which is thus equal to the gift of the earth,

one becomes honoured and goes with his ancestral manes to the supreme abode of Viṣṇu.

36-37. By the gift of the cow, one gets fully purified even if he has incurred the sins of stealing the property of the Brahmin, killing a cow, destroying the foetus, deceit, defiling the Brahmin, ridiculing prescribed rites and similar others.

38. On the day of the gift of the double-faced cow, the giver may feed on milk or milky preparations.

39-40. (The gift should be accompanied by) a thousand gold pieces, half of it or a quarter of it, or a hundred or even fifty or according to means. There need not be any stipulation in this respect.

41. (The giver should utter): "Receive this double-faced cow. I give this to you so that I may have good progeny and peace of mind. Let this bring about prosperity".

42. (The recipient should utter): "O cow, I receive you particularly for my family. O mother of gods, I bow to you. Let good befall me".

43. (The giver should then say): "I bow to you again and again. May good befall me always". (He should utter the mantra)." May the heaven give you and the earth receive you. Who gave this to whom?"

44. The Brahmin should then be allowed to go and the cow should be taken to his house.

45. O Earth, he who also gives this gift of the parturient cow gets the merit of the gift of the whole of the earth with its seven islands.

46. The congregation of Devas always worship (the Kapilā) who is beautiful like the moon and golden in complexion.

47-48. He who reads these rules (about Kapilā) early morning, pure of mind and with full control of the senses, gets rid of sins acquired during one whole year. The sins are blown away like dust by the wind.

49. If this is read at the time of Śrāddha, the food becomes particularly purified and the manes eat it with pleasure.

50. If this is read before Brahmins on Amāvāsyā day, the manes become pleased for a hundred years.

51. He who listens to his gets purified of all sins accumulated during the year.

The priest said:

52. I have thus told you this secret, the greatness of the cow, formerly narrated to Earth by Varāha.

53. He who gifts Tiladhenu on the dvādaśī day of the bright half of the month of Māgha, gets all wishes fulfilled and goes to the abode of Viṣṇu.

54. On the dvādaśī day of the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the gift of the real cow should be made along with gold.

55. O king, the gift of any kind of cow at any time is capable of removing all sins.

56. I have thus briefly told you this extensive matter relating to the gift of cows which fulfils all desires of men.

57. (You may do this). Otherwise you will continue to be tormented much by hunger (and thirst).

58. O king, now is the month of Kārttika when the whole earth is full of fresh plants.

59. Devas, Rākṣasas and Yakṣas all mingle in this.

60. A golden cow with fruits and gems may be given to the priest particularly on the dvādaśī day or pañcadaśī day (new moon or full moon) in the month of Kārttika.

61. This will be equivalent to the gift of the whole world.

62. He who performs a yajña with dakṣiṇā of ten thousand (gold pieces), really covers only a part of the universe.

63. But he who performs this (gift of the cow) covers the whole universe, whatever is offered in fire, gifted, read or recited.

64. Hearing this, the king gave the sage a golden pot representing the universe.

65. He then got his desires fulfilled and went to heaven.

66. Therefore, O king, you too do the same.

Told thus by Vasiṣṭha, the king too did the same and attained supreme abode by reaching which one becomes free from all sorrow.

Varāha said:

67. O Earth, I have thus told you about this great and sanctifying treatise Varāha Purāṇa.

68. This arose from the omniscient (Viṣṇu), and from him Brahmā learnt it.

69. Brahmā imparted it to his son Pulastya and the latter to Paraśurāma.

70. Paraśurāma imparted it to his disciple Ugra, who, in turn, gave it to Manu. In that line I have told you now.

71. Another dissemination of the same also you may know. I learnt it from the omniscient (Viṣṇu) and you have now got it from me.

72. From you, sages like Kapila will know by the power of their penance. In due course this will be learnt by Vyāsa.

73. He will have a disciple by name Romaharṣaṇi. He will impart it to Śaunaka and none else.

74. The teacher Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa) knows eighteen Purāṇas namely, Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Bhāgavata.

75. Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Āgneya, Bhaviṣya.

76. Brahmavaivarta, Laiṅga, Vārāha, Skānda.

77. Vāmana, Kaurma, Mātsya, Gāruḍa and Brahmāṇḍa.

78. O Earth, he who gets them or reads with reverence on the dvādaśī day in the month of Kārttika, begets children.

79. Lord Nārāyaṇa is always present in the house in which these are kept written.

80. He who listens to this continuously, and after listening worships (this Purāṇa) Varāha.

81. And performs worship of Viṣṇu with sandalpaste, flowers and clothes, and propitiates Brahmins.

82. And the king who worships along with his subjects and according to his ability, gets freed from sins and attains merger in lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN

The hymn on the Lord

Om, bow to Varāha, bow to the son of Brahmā, bow to Sanatkumāra.

1. Bow to that Varāha who raises up the earth with ease, and within whose hoofs mountain Meru tinkles.

2. May this Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the destroyer of demons

Mura, Naraka and Rāvaṇa, who, in the form of the boar, raised by the tip of the tusks the earth full of mountains and rivers and encircled by the ocean, for removing the fear of his devotees, whom the sinless saints easily attain, remove all adversities.

3-4. Earth who was thus raised up in the former kalpa asked the great lord in all reverence.

Earth said:

5. O lord, in every aeon you and you alone raise me up. Otherwise, O Keśava, my body cannot move, not even my hands.

6. When the lord was consoling her, came there Sanatkumāra and, blessing her, he said.

Sanatkumāra said:

7. O Earth, you who are Viṣṇu's and prosper by him, tell me what wonder you have seen when you were held by him.

8. Please tell me also what you have heard from him.

9. Hearing these words of the son of Brahmā (Sanatkumāra), Earth said:

Earth said:

10. "O great Brahmin, listen to the essence of the great secret he told me in response to my request.

11. He told me about what should be done by a devotee of Viṣṇu in order to release himself from the miseries of worldly existence.

12. He told me the great secret of the eternal and ever valid dharma".

13. Hearing these words of Earth, the great sage Sanatkumāra brought there the ascetics from his place Kokāmukha.

14. He then spoke to Earth.

Sanatkumāra said:

15. "O lovely goddess, tell me now what I sought of you, namely the essence of dharma and the path to salvation".

16. Earth then bowed to that great sage and spoke to him in sweet words.

Earth said:

17. "O sages, may you all be ready to hear what I have learnt from Viṣṇu." They said, "yes, O goddess, tell us".

(She then said praising Viṣṇu):

18. "When the world was without sun, moon, stars and fire, when the quarters were all still and nothing was known.

19. When the wind did not blow, the fire did not blaze and the lightning did not flash, when the star did not shine and the zodiac did not appear, and nothing was there.

20. And when the Vedas were lost, you assumed the form of a fish, entered the underworld, recovered the Vedas and restored them to Brahmā.

21. O lord, during the churning of the ocean, you became a tortoise and held the Mandara mountain.

22. Then, when I was sinking into the nether world, you took the form of the boar and lifted me up from the ocean with a single tusk.

23. When hiraṇyakaśipu became haughty because of a boon, he was destroyed by you in the form of man-lion.

24. O lord, once I was seen by you exhilirated by the extermination of the Kṣatriyas, in your form as Paraśurāma.

25. Then by your prowess the demon Rāvaṇa was vanquished, and in the form of the dwarf, O lord, Bali was bound.

26. I am not in the least able to know your actions. How do you raise me up and why do you create beings in me?

27. And even after creation, nothing could be known. The wind does not blow, fire does not blaze.

28. The sun and moon are not there, no stars, no planets; no Mars, no Venus, no Jupiter.

29. No Saturn, no Mercury, no Indra, Kubera, Yama or Varuṇa or Devas.

30. No trinity, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

Being distressed,[1] Earth sought resort in Brahmā.

31. Having gone there, she said in a plaintive tone: "O grand-father, I am sinking with the mountains and forests in me, because of my unbearable burden. Be pleased to save me".

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1. The portion from here upto the end of verse 40 is out of place here and seems to be an interpolation.

32. Hearing the words of Earth, the grandfather of the world, meditated for a while and told her.

33. "O earth, I am helpless to save you in this sad predicament of yours.

34. Rush to Viṣṇu, the originator of all, who stands with bow and arrow and who has magical powers.

35. All activity is due to him alone. He is capable of saving all, then why say about you".

36. Earth with folded hands approached him, who was lying in yogic repose on the serpent Ananta.

Earth said:

37. On account of my burden, I sought the help of Brahmā, but he sent me away saying:

38. 'O fair goddess, I am unable to save you, please go to Viṣṇu.

39. He will hold you if you happen to sink in the ocean'.

40. O lord of the worlds, I have now come to you with supplication. Be pleased to protect me.

41. You are Āditya, Candra, Yama, Kubera, Indra, Varuṇa Agni and Vāyu. You are the quarters main and subsidiary, and all that is permanent and transient.

42. You are (the avatāras) Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana, (Paraśu)rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki.

43. Your greatness in this manner is known by yogic powers, and you remain the same aeon after aeon.

44. The earth, air, ether, water and light, and sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, are all yourself.

45-46. The planets and stars, (units of time like) kalā, kāṣṭhā and muhūrta, the entire milky way and the pole stars are all your effulgence.

47. The month, fortnight and day, the seasons, the half-year and the year are all yours.

48. The rivers, oceans, mountains and snakes are all yourself.

49. You are (the mountains) Meru, Mandara Vindhya, Malaya, Dardura, Himavān and Niṣadha.

50. You bear the disc and the bow. You are Sāṅkhya-yoga.

You are the tradition of the world, you are the adorable Nārāyaṇa.

51. You are diminutive as well as extensive, you are the sacrifice permanent. You are the greatest of all yajñas and of the sacrificial pillars.

52. You are Sāma among the Vedas, and Mahāvrata in all its detail. You are thunder as well as rain and you are truth as well as untruth.

53. You generate ambrosia and sustain with it the whole world. You are satisfaction, supreme satisfaction and the most ancient Man.

54. You are all that is movable and stationary in the world and all action. You are the lord of all the seven worlds.

55. You are time, you are death. You are the origin and cause of all beings. You are the beginning, middle and end. You are intelligence, intellect and memory.

56. You are the sun, aeon, ascetic penance. You are measureless, you are all that is to be known and the greatest of all sages.

57. You are Ananta among the snakes and Takṣaka among serpents. You are the (winds) Udvaha and Pravaha, and Varuṇa and the sea.

58. You project the world in sport, you are the gods in the homes. You pervade everything, nourish everything. You are the mind.

59. You are energy of every kind and the brightest of all flashes. At all times you are the biggest of all trees.

60. O lord, you are attention, you are the dispeller of all evils. You are the source of all the four types of beings, egg-born, earth-born, sweat-born and womb-born.

61. You are the great Garuḍa and you bear everything. You are the sounds of all drums, and the pure sky.

62. You are Jaya and Vijaya[1]; all the domestic deities are your manifestations. You are all-pervasive.

63. You are Bhaga, Liṅga, and the supreme soul. You are to be worshipped by all. I bow to you, O lord, again and again.

64. O lord Kṛṣṇa, it behoves you who have in you all the

1. These two are the doorkeepers of Viṣṇu.

worlds and the entire time, to protect me when I am sinking down."

65. He who recites this hymn of Viṣṇu is cured of all diseases and freed from all bondages.

66. The issueless man gets issue, the poor man gets wealth, the man without a life gets one and the girl without a husband gets one.

67. He who recites this in the morning and evening goes to the world of Viṣṇu. There need be no doubt in this matter.

68. Even if this is mechanically recited (without knowing the meaning), one gets a place in heaven for a thousand years.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN

The Varāha incarnation—Questions of Earth

Varāha said:

1. Lord Nārāyaṇa was extremely pleased when he was extolled.

2. He then meditated for a while and spoke to Earth in a sweet voice.

3. "With great reverence have you told me what you badly need. I shall do what you wish.

4. I shall hold you along with your mountains, forests, rivers and oceans and the seven islands".

5. Comforting Earth thus, the lord assumed the form of a big boar full of effulgence.

6. It was six thousand yojanas long and three thousand yojanas broad, and thus covered nine thousand yojanas.

7. The whole earth with its mountains, forests, islands and cities was raised up by the left tusk.

8. Some mountains were clinging, some falling. It all looked like clouds of various farmations and colours at evening time.

9. The earth clinging to the white tusk of the boar looked like the clod of clay with a lotus stalk.

10. It was thus held in the tusk for a thousand years.

11. Time then passed and then set in the seventyfirst Kalpa, the lord of which was Kardama Prajāpati.

12. That was the Varāha kalpa wherein the mutual regard for Viṣṇu and Earth was the highest.

13. Earth extolled that eternal Person and sought complete resort in him.

Earth asked:

14. O lord, what is the foundation and what is the practice of different actions (for man) to be done from time to time ?

15. What is the nature of evening sandhyā ? Do all those who perform rites get the same result?

16. How do we know the measure regarding the consecration invocation and release (of deities for worship and of agaru, candana, dhūpa etc.?

17. How is pādya (water for washing feet) to be offered, how is unguent to be applied, how is the lamp to be waved and how are the roots and fruits to be offered ?

18. What are the rules for the seat and the bed for the deity, how is worship to be performed and how many are the vital airs to be instilled ?

19. What is the merit to be acquired in the morning and evening sandhyās. What are the rituals in the śarat (autumn) season, what are they in śiśira (winter) ?

20. What are the rituals to be performed in vasanta (spring) and what are they in grīṣma (summer) ? What are they in prāvṛṭ (rainy season) ? What is laid down for the end of the year ?

21. What are the flowers and the fruits that can be used ? Who are entitled to offer worship and who are prohibited ?

22. By what actions does one attain Viṣṇu ? How do these actions take one to the level beyond that of food ?

23. What is the size of the idol to be used and how is it to be installed ? what is the nature of fasting and what is its duration ?

24. What are the rules regarding cloths (to be used in worship), yellow, white and red ?

25. What are the constituents of Madhuparka ? What are the benefits that accrue from it ?

26. To what worlds do we go by taking in Madhuparka ?

27. What is the measure of Madhuparka to be offered? What kinds of flesh, fruit and leaves are to be mixed with it?

28. What are the rites of invocation to be observed?

29. What are the mantras to be used in offering food after due invocation?

30. After food, what are the things to be done by the devotee so that there may not be any fault?

31. What is the food for those who pray to you eating only once a day?

32. What is the place of those in the life beyond, who worship you following the rules?

33. What position do those get who worship you with the rituals Kṛcchra and Sāntapana?

34. What position do those get who worship Kṛṣṇa, living on air alone?

35. What position do those get, O Kṛṣṇa, who worship you living on food without salt and chillies?

36. What position do those get who worship you living on milk alone?

37. What position do those get who worship Viṣṇu with vows and tending cows?

38. What position do those get who worship with great devotion and live on begging alms?

39. What position do those get who worship living as householders but feeding on what is offered to them?

40. What position do those get who always serve you in your temples and die there?

41. To what worlds do those go who end their lives in your temples performing penance with the five fires?

42. What position do those get who end their lives by performing penance with the five fires but lying on a bed of thorns?

43. What position do those devotees get who do the same in bed of thorns but lying without touching the earth?

44. What position do those get who worship you lying in the cowshed?

45. What position do those devotees get who worship you living on vegetables alone?

46. What position do those get who worship you living on grains and Pañcagavya ?[1]

47. What position do those get who worship you living on gruel and cowdung ?

48. What is the position, O Nārāyaṇa, for those who worship you feeding on flour ?

49. What is the position for those who serve you lighting a lamp on their heads ?

50. What is the position for those who carry lamps on their heads and worship you always thinking of you and drinking milk alone ?

51. What is the position for those devotees of yours who eat stones alone ?

52. What is the position for those devotees who feed on the dūrvā grass ?

53. What is the position for those who follow their own traditional avocations and pray to you kneeling ?

54. What is the position for those who worship you lying flat and holding a lamp ?

55. What position do they get who worship you holding a lamp between their legs ?

56. What position do they get who worship you turning their faces away ?

57. What position do they get lying with face downwards, giving up their family and possessions ?

58. Be pleased to give me answers for all these that I have asked you in the interest of the world.

59. O Mādhava, every movement depends on you. You are knower, you are the father; in you is the decision regarding all dharma.

60. Therefore, you alone can answer all these which have a bearing on Sāṅkhya-yoga.

61. How should your devotee who has offered you Madhuparka, be consigned to fire when he is dead ?

62. What place do your devotees attain who remain in water or in your temples ?

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1. Pañcagavya is a preparation consisting of cow's milk, curd and ghee from it and its urine and cowdung.

63. What place do they attain who utter your name Nārā-yaṇa, though calling one's own son?

64. What place do those warriors attain who die in battle uttering your name?

65. O lord, I am your disciple and servant. So be pleased to tell me this secret dharma.

66. For my sake please impart me this secret.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

Origin of different dharmas (Karmas of different castes)

1. Hearing these words of Earth, lord Nārāyaṇa said: "O goddess, I shall tell you about the actions that lead to the pleasures of heaven.

2. O Earth, I shall answer your questions relating to the existence and attitude of devotees that are laid down.

3. I am never pleased with petty-minded people even if they make a thousand dānas, perform hundreds of sacrifices and offer a lot of money.

4. I am pleased with him who (tried to) know me with steadfast mind even though he may have many faults.

5. Now that you ask me about the actions that lead to the pleasures of heaven, I shall tell you. Please listen.

6. Those people who bow to me always, at midnight, in darkness, at noon or afternoon, although of diverse minds.

7. Who with unfailing devotion to me observe fast on Dvā-daśī day.

8. Realise me in the fruition of their devotion.

9. The good man with clean mind devoted to me gets a place in heaven by the very desire.

10. I shall tell you about those actions in the path of devotion that lead to my realisation.

11. Those devotees who fast on Dvādaśī day certainly attain me.

12. He who after fasting, offers me libations of water saying 'Bow to Nārāyaṇa' and looks at the sun.

13. Remains honoured in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are drops in the water of libation.

14-15. Now listen to what happens to those pious people who worship me on dvādaśī day with due rites and with white flowers and incense.

16. Putting flowers on the head and dressing in white cloth he may utter the mantra: "May the worshipful lord Hari be pleased to accept these flowers."

17. Sandal paste is to be offered with the mantra: "Bow to lord Viṣṇu, be pleased to accept the sandalpaste which gives out its scent fully and slightly alternately or fragrant sandalpaste".

18. The incense is to be offered with the manta: "May lord Acyuta receive the incense at the main ritual".

19. He who makes my image according to Śāstras reaches my abode and becomes four-armed.

20. Thus have I told you, O goddess, this mantrapūjā which brings about happiness and which is dear to me.

21. He, who being devoted to my service, eats (only) the grains śyāmāka,svastika, godhūma, mudgaka, śāli, yava, nīvāra and kāṅguka, attains (the divine) conch, disc, plough and club.

22. O Earth, I shall now tell you what actions the Brahmins devoted to me should do.

23. Free from ego and attending seriously to the six duties ordained,[1] with full control of senses, living on alms and unconcerned about loss or gain.

24. Engaged in my service, free from malignity, following the prescribed rules, fully unbiased, and neither senile nor childish.

25. Performing deeds beneficial to the people at large, and full of concentration of mind, such a Brahmin attains me.

26. I shall now tell you about what the Kṣatriyas devoted to me should do.

27. Free from bias, munificent in gifts, pure, keen on sacrifices, devoted to my service, free from ego.

28. Reserved in speech, capable of knowing merit, always considerate towards other devotees, free from malice, avoiding all prohibited deeds, learning from the master.

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1. The six duties of the Brahmin are *adhyāpana* (teaching) *adhyayana* (learning), *yajana* (performing sacrifice), *yājana* (making others perform sacrifice), *dāna* (giving gifts) and *pratigraha* (receiving gifts).

29. Eager to show respect to others, without a trace of avarice, such a Kṣatriya attains me.

30. I shall now tell you about what the Vaiśya devoted to me should do.

31. Doing the duties ordained to him, without the motive of gain or loss, doing the duties by his wife at the proper time, free from greed, calm in mind.

32. Remaining pure, skilful, fasting when worshipping me.

33. Always honouring his guru, considerate towards other devotees, such a Vaiśya always remains mine and I always remain his.

34. I shall now tell you about what the Śūdra should do in order that he may be mine.

35. Husband and wife always pious, devoted to me and ever engaged in doing service to me.

36. Knowing the appropriate place and time for their actions, unstained by Rajas and Tamas.

37. Free from ego, pure in mind, humble, hospitable, free from greed and malice, and full of sincerity.

38. Fond of prostrating (before me), ever thinking of me, such be the actions of the Śūdras.

39. Leaving thousands of sages, I always look after Śūdras. Such are the duties of devotees in the four castes which you wished to know.

40. So much about the four castes. Now listen to another matter relating to yoga (of attaining me).

41. Giving up (thoughts of) gain and loss, delusion and desire.

42. Without thinking of heat and cold, what is obtained and what is not, without preference among what is hot, bitter, sweet, sour and saline.

43. Giving up attachment towards wife, children, father and mother and concentrating on service to me.

44. Steadfast, proficient, serious and determined.

45. Always earnest, averse to all other actions, doing things appropriate to his age, eating the minimum, maintaining family prestige.

46. Full of compassion, honouring all, highly patient, keeping silence when necessary, particularly when observing vows.

47. Performing rites prescribed for morning, noon and evening, not taking food without giving it to others.

48. Doing all actions with me in the mind, answering calls of nature and bathing at the right time.

49. Always eager to offer me sandalpaste, flowers and incense.

50. Eating sometimes roots, sometimes fruits, sometimes milk, sometimes what is got by begging, and sometimes living simply on air.

51. Sometimes eating once in four days, at other times once in six days, often once in ten days or once in a fortnight or once in a month.

52. Those that do all this in seven lives, become yogins and attain me.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN

Happiness and unhappiness

Varāha said:

1. O blessed one, now listen to the benefits that accrue to those that perform actions in the manner stated above.

2. With full concentration of mind, free from ego, always devoted to me, full of forbearance, tranquil and with senses controlled.

3. Taking in roots and fruits and leaves at times on the Dvādaśī day, feeding mainly on milk and abstaining from meat.

4. Observing continence on Ṣaṣṭhī, Aṣṭamī, Amāvāsyā and Caturdaśī, particularly on dvādaśī.

5. He who performs rites according to the rules of yoga, gets purified, acquires merit and goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

6. For him there is no fatigue, no decay, no stupor, no illness. He gets eighteen hands endowed with bow, arrow, sword, mace and the like.

7. The benefit that accrues as a result of actions in this manner and worship of mine, is the residence in my world for sixty thousand and sixty hundred years.

8. O Earth, I shall now tell you what is unhappiness. Please listen.

9. Is there anything more unhappy than a man being unable to attain me because of his ego and delusion enveloping him ?

10. Is there anything more unhappy than a man being unable to attain me because of his eating anything and trading on anything and not prostrating before me ?

11. Is there anything more sorrowful than being the man who at the time of Vaiśvadeva sees a guest coming but, without giving him food, himself eats.

12. Is there anything more unhappy than the man whose food Devas do not partake of because of differentiation in preparation ?

13. Is there anything more despicable than a person who is unhappy in adversity, establishes illicit contact with another's wife, torments others and is slow-witted ?

14. Is there anything more pitiable than a person who spends all his life till death grasps him, in his house without doing righteous deeds in profusion ?

15. Is there anything more contemptible than the person who runs after elephants, horses, chariots and other vehicles ?

16. Is there anything more sorrowful than this that some eat meat, some eat it with grain and others eat dry food ?

17. Is there anything more disquieting than the fact that some sleep in ornamental beds of costly cloth and others sleep on the grass in the floor ?

18. Is there anything more disturbing than the fact that some people are handsome and some ugly although this may be the result of their own deeds ?

19. Is there anything more distressing than the fact that some are virtuous and learned in all śāstras while others are seen dumb ?

20. Is there anything more annoying than the fact that wealthy personal are niggardly while poor people are generous ?

21. Is there anything more condemnable than the man who, having married two wives, favours one and discards the other ?

22. If the three castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya, are engaged in sinful actions, can there be anything more detestable ?

23. Having got human birth, if one does not strive to attain me, can there be anything more deplorable ?

24. I have thus told you about the actions leading to unhappiness which you asked me.

25. Now I shall tell you about the actions leading to happiness which you asked me.

26. Let all actions be dedicated to me. Those that are otherwise lead to unhappiness.

27. Is there anything more happy than eating the food remaining after offering it to me?

28. Is there anything more happy than observing rites in the morning, noon and evening, particularly the last?

29. Is there anything more happy than offering food to the gods, guests and men in general and then oneself taking it?

30. Is there anything more happy than giving a supplicant something instead of sending him away disappointed?

31. Is there anything more happy than propitiating the manes on Amāvāsyā day every month?

32. Is there anything more happy than giving food of barley to those that have come seeking food, without a trace of unwillingness on the face?

33. If a person with two wives looks upon both alike, is there anything more happy for him?

34. He, who with pure mind, always observes non-violence, attains happiness.

35. If, on seeing the beautiful wife of another, the mind does not flutter, can there be greater happiness?

36. Can there be greater happiness for a person if he is able to see as mere stones gold and gems like pearl?

37. Can there be anything more happy than giving up life in the midst of the battle which delights the horses and elephants?

38. He who lives contented condemning wrong actions for attaining the ends, is prone to be happy.

39. Can there be greater happiness for a woman who pleases her husband considering him to be everything for her in life?

40. Can there be anything more gratifying if a man, in spite of his being rich, is learned and has full control of the senses?

41. If one is forbearing of an offence, is not dispirited in adversity, and knows everything well, can there be a greater cause for pleasure?

42. He who leaves off his mortal coil in my temples, be that

with any desire or without any desire, can there be anything more happy for him ?

43. Is there anything more happy than honouring the parents like gods ?

44. Can there be anything more happy than cohabiting with the wife with full attention every month after the course ?

45. He who worships me like this, never ceases to be mine and I never cease to be his.

46. Thus have I told you the directions for the good for the sake of the world in reply to your question.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

The thirtytwo offences

Varāha said:

1. O blessed goddess, now listen to the rules of food, about eating food as well as avoiding it.

2. The food has a bearing on attaining me, because the man who follows dharma reaches me even if he chances to do an inauspicious act.

3. Let the prescribed food be taken always. Vrīhi and Śāli grains (cereals) are to be used

4. I shall tell you about the grains (food) prohibited, because to use them is an offence.

5. The first offence, which I always dislike is to worship me after taking another's food.

6. The second offence, which obstructs dharma, is to touch me after a sexual contact.

7. The third offence, O earth, is to attend to me after seeing a woman in her courses.

8. The fourth offence, one which I never tolerate, is to serve me after touching a dead body and without undergoing the necessary purification.

9. The fifth offence, which I do not brook, is to touch me after seeing a dead body and without taking ācamana.

10. The sixth offence, which I do not forgive, is to go for answering calls of nature in the midst of my worship.

11. The seventh offence, O Earth, is to serve me wearing blue cloth.

12. The eighth offence, O Earth, is to talk much while engaged in my service.

13. The ninth offence, O Earth, is to worship me without purifying oneself according to the rules.

14. The tenth offence which displeases me, is to do me service with an angry mind.

15. The eleventh offence is to consider in my worship prohibited objects as conducive to merit.

16. The twelfth offence is to worship me wearing cloth made red with saffron.

17. The thirteenth offence is to touch me in darkness.

18. The fourteenth offence is to serve me wearing black cloth.

19. The fifteenth offence is to serve me wearing unwashed cloth.

20. The sixteenth offence is to eat food even unknowingly (while engaged in my worship).

21. The seventeenth offence is to approach me after eating fish and meat.

22. The eighteenth offence is to approach me after eating goose (and other waterbirds).

23. The nineteenth offence, O Earth, is to come to me after touching my lamp-bearer.[1]

24. The twentieth offence, O fair goddess, is to approach me after going to the cremation ground.

25. The twentyfirst offence, O Earth, is to approach me after eating oil-cake.

26. The twentysecond offence is to take pork as food conducive to attaining me.

27. The twentythird offence, O Earth, is to approach me after drinking liquor.

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1. The word is *dīpaka*. What it means here is not quite clear.

28. The twentyfourth offence, O Earth, is to approach me after eating vegetables with saffron.

29. The twentyfifth offence, O Earth, is to approach me putting on the garment of another.

30. The twentysixth offence, O Earth, is to eat fresh food without offering it first to the gods or manes.

31. The twentyseventh offence, is to go to the tank (for bathing) with footwear on.

32. The twentyeighth offence, O virtuous one, is to come to me after tormenting the body.

33. The twentyninth offence, which never takes one to heaven, is to approach me with undigested food (in the abdomen).

34. The thirtieth offence is to offer me incense without offering sandalpaste and flowers.

35. The thirtyfirst offence, O noble one, is to open the door (of my temple) without sounding the drums.

36. The thirtysecond offence should be taken as the most serious.[1]

37. I shall now tell you about Dṛḍhavrata (strong vow) by observing which one attains me.

38. Learning the Śāstras, always remaining devoted to me and rendering service to me, following non-violence, being compassionate to all beings, affable to all, pure, clever.

39. Controlling senses completely, without committing any offence, being generous, righteous, well attached to the wife.

40. Observing the rules prescribed for the four castes, (he who worships me attains me).

41. She who is devoted to the preceptor, devoted to the husband and looks after the family (also attains me by worshipping me).

42. The man who is my devotee reaches me even if he gives up his wife, but awaits here the devoted wife.

43. I shall now tell you about the best of all actions.

44. Even sages who follow the path of devotion are not able to easily realise me, what then about ordinary men ?

45. Those sinful people who are attached to other gods, are deluded by my magical power and do not attain me.

1. It is simply stated as mahāparādha. What it is, is not given.

46. O Earth, those who resort to me desirous of liberation, get purified and get places allotted (in my world).

47. I told you all this because of the fact that I hold you with great energy.

48. This should not be instructed to a slanderer, a fool, an uninitiated or the cunning.

49. Nor to the vowless, base or the impious.

50. To none other than the devotees of mine.

51. I have thus told you all this about dharma for the sake of the world. What else have you to ask me now?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN

Rituals in Idol worship

Varāha said:

1. O blessed one, listen to the expiation that my devotee is to offer.

2. Take the tooth stick. Do not light the lamp till the ground is touched.

3. As soon as the lamp is lighted, wash the hands and then approach the idol.

4. Bow to the feet and offer the toothstick with the mantra.

5. "O the abode of the worlds, excelling the sun in lustre, endless, middle, receive this universal toothstick".

6. In accordance with the rules explained to you, O Earth, the teeth should be cleaned.

7. The flower placed on the head of the idol the previous day should be taken and placed on one's own.

8. The hand should then be washed with water and the face of the idol should be sprinkled with a little water.

9. The mantra for it is this and by reciting it one gets release from the world:

10. "O lord, receive these waters by their quality and soul." The faces of all deities should be washed in this way. By the same mantra should be offered sandal paste, incense, lamp and food.

11. Then handfuls of flowers should be offered saying "O

lord Nārāyaṇa, who look after the devotees, I bow to you," and then utter the mantra.

12. "I bow to the sacrificer of those who know the mantras, and the creator of all beings". Further flowers should be offered.

13. The devotee, with due knowledge and purity of mind, should worship the lord in this manner and then throw himself down with all his actions.

14. Making the body fall in this way, he should seek the grace of the lord and with hands folded over the head, utter this mantra:

15. "Getting clear consciousness by the mantras I pray O lord, when you are pleased and by your wish only even the yogins attain liberation.

16. Since I am your servant as you have stated, be pleased with me".

17. After doing all this seriously he should quickly go behind.

18. The idol should then be bathed in oil first and then in ghee.

19. Then with full concentration of mind, the devotee should offer oil with the mantra:

20. "O lord of the worlds, I am offering this oil with affection and with my hand to you who pervade the whole world. I have said 'Pardon me.' I bow to you again and again."

21. With this mantra it should be first applied to the head.

22. Then the right hand, then the left and afterwards the back and then the waist.

23. Then cowdung should be smeared on the floor.

24. I shall tell you what benefits accrue by this anointing.

25. The man who bathes the idol in ghee or oil remains in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are drops in them.

26. He who does this is honoured in my world.

27. Now I shall tell you about the application of unguents by which the body is purified and I am pleased.

28. The unguent should be made of lodhra, the juice of fig and the leaves at Madhūka, Aśvaparṇa, Rohiṇa and Karkaṭa.

29-30. The ingredients may be either crushed by the hand or otherwise made into powder and then applied. It makes my body pleasant.

31. For complete fulfilment, after the application of the unguent, the bathing (proper) should be done.

32. Then the whole body of the idol should he rubbed with (the fruits of) Āmalaka and Vasugandha.

33. Taking then the pot of water this mantra should be uttered:

34. "O sinless lord, you are the god of gods, you have no beginning, you are supreme, be pleased to accept this bath for your visible form". Thus should the bath be conducted by those who follow my path.

35. The water for bath may be taken in golden or silver pot, and if they are not available, in copper pot.

36. After this ritual of bath, sandalpaste should be applied with the mantra.

37-38. "O Mādhava, all scents from flowers and all colours are liked by you. These which arise in different worlds are combined by you in Satyaloka. I am now applying the same on your body in pure form. Being pleased by my devotion, do me the favour of accepting it".

39. After applying sandal (with the perfumes) perform other edifying actions.

40. Adorn me with garlands of the prescribed kind and continue the ritual.

41. Then offer handfuls of flowers and utter the mantra:

42. "O Acyuta, accept these clean flowers, waterborn as well as land-born in this season, for my release from this worldly existence".

43. After this may be offered incense from fragrant substances with the mantra.

44-46. "Be pleased to receive this incense the essence of the great trees mixed with many ingredients, for the sake of deliverance from worldly existence. This for peace for all Devas, peace for me and peace for all devotees. I bow to you. O lord of the worlds, there is no saviour for me other than you".

47. After this, adorn the idol with sandalpaste, unguents and garlands. Then decorate with white and yellow silk garments.

48. Then with hands folded over the head and remaining in meditation, he should utter.

49. "May this please lord Puruṣottama, of the nature of bliss, the abode of Lakṣmī, the creator, protector, overlord, lord of all beings, the primordial being. I dress you in beautiful yellow silk".

50. After this, I should be provided seat in a pedestal of flowers.

51. Then naivedya should be offered uttering 'Om'.

52. "O lord, receive this (naivedya) which is the giver of life and mutually pleasing."

53. After this he should quickly give water for washing the mouth.

54. The naivedya given should be pure and the water for washing is essential for making it acceptable.

55. After thus offering food and water, betel leaf and areca-nut should be given with the mantra.

56. "O lord of the worlds, receiving this tāmbūla which is an ornament to all gods and which is mixed with all fragrant substances, be pleased to remain in this idol of yours in this house.

57. Please receive this fine decoration for your mouth reverentially given by me".

58. The devotee who worships me in this way gets liberated and remains in my great world for ever.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

Food forbidden in worship

1. Hearing the rules of rituals in worship which lead to liberation, Earth asked again the pleasant lord.

Earth said:

2. "I have heard from you now about the efficacious actions that lead to attaining you. Be pleased to tell me what are the materials to be used for it".

3. Hearing the words of Earth, Varāha was much pleased and spoke these words of virtue.

Varāha said:

4. The mantras to be utilised (have been said. Now I shall tell you about the materials).

5. The seven kinds of grain together with milk and vegetables and the (fruits of) Madhūka and Udumbara (are commendable).

6. There are others in hundreds and thousands which I may tell you.

7. I shall say about the grains that can be used. Listen to me with attention.

8-9. The vegetable Cillika, the fragrant raktaśāli, the long śāli, the big śāli, good saffron, fine honey, the sweet-smelling śivasundarī, śīrika and kulaśālika and different kinds of cooked barley are commended in worship.

10-11. Green gram, black gram, horse gram, sesamum,panic-seed, gavedhu, makuṣṭa, vāhija, and śyāmāka are all permitted.

12. All this I accept if devoutly offered; also the flesh of deer, goat and hare.

13. All these are dear to me in the worship meant to attain me.

14. When the goat is offered in sacrifice by the Vaidic Brahmin, a part of it comes to me as my share.

15. The milk, curd and ghee of the buffalo should be avoided. The devotee of Viṣṇu should avoid its meat, even the food cooked in its milk.

16. The birds that are to be used also in my worship, I shall tell you now.

17-18. The flesh of the birds lāvaka, vārtika and kapiñjala are used in my temples.

19. He who does the worship following these instructions (and restrictions) does not commit any fault and good befalls him.

20. Those who worship me in this manner with all the rituals attain their goal.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY

The worship of Sandhyā

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, I shall tell you the great secret of crossing the worldly existence which you asked me about.

2. My devotees, duly taking bath, approach me with full control of mind and eating but a trifle of food.

3. O blessed one, my form is eternal. I am the one that permeates all beings.

4. It is I that is above, below and the sides, as also at the quarters and subquarters.

5. Obeisance should, therefore, be made to all these by the devotees desirous of salvation.

6. I shall also tell you this secret that by worshipping these my followers acquire great fame.

7. With concentration of mind, the devotee should turn to east and take water in both hands held together.

8. He should then say *Om namo nārāyaṇāya* (Bow to Nārāyaṇa) and then utter:

9. "I bow to that great and merciful primordial man, the most important in all the worlds, Nārāyaṇa the origin of dharma. I offer sacrifice to him".

10. Then turning to west and similarly holding water he should utter Dvādaśākṣara (*Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*) and then the mantra:

11. "I extol that eternal being, the most ancient, whose desire is never in vain, the first creator who manifests himself in all objects".

12. Then holding water in the same manner he should turn to the north and uttering *Om namo nārāyaṇāya* recite the mantra:

13. "I offer sacrifice to that most divine being, the most ancient without beginning or end, of eternal form, the originator of life and the world,the most tranquil, unique, the liberator from the woes of worldly life".

14. Then inmediately turning to the south (similarly holding water in the hands) he should utter *Om namaḥ puruṣottamāya* and recite the mantra:

15. "I offer sacrifice to the great being of endless forms, the

first, the truth, the righteous, of the form of time, for liberation from worldly life".

16. Then remaining steady like wood and fully controlling the senses and concentrating the mind on Viṣṇu, he should utter the mantra.

17. "I offer sacrifice to the lord of the worlds, with the sun and moon as his eyes, the foremost of all in the worlds, the drinker of soma juice, the liberator from death and worldly existence".

18. The devotee of mine who desires beatitude may do this wisely and sincerely during morning, moon and evening.

19. This is the secret of all secrets, the highest of yoga and the best of Sāṅkhya.

20. This should not be inparted to the dunce, the cheat or the crooked; it can be imparted only to the good, initiated disciple.

21. These secret instructions given by Viṣṇu should be well borne in mind and never be forgotten even at the time of death.

22. He who learns this well and follows the instructions, always finds a place in my mind.

23. He who worships the sandhyā in this manner, whatever be his form here, reaches my abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYONE

The absence of birth

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, listen to me. I shall tell you the essence of all *dharma* by which one can remain without entering into birth.

2. One is not able to realise the self even after performing the prescribed rites with purity of mind.

3. But he who performs the duties by me, becomes blessed and able to distinguish between right and wrong.

4. He who bears heat and cold alike, overcomes thirst and hunger, speaks the truth, is not jealous, persevering even if poor.

5. Is devoted to his own wife and discards the women of others, is honest and dedicated to the Lord.

6. Sets on the good from the bad, is well disposed towards Brahmins, speaks endearingly to them, and is attached to my service.

7. Such a person never goes to a cursed womb, but reaches my abode.

8. O Earth, I shall tell you another thing regarding my devotee's never going to a bad womb.

9. He who refrains from all sorts of injury, is kindly disposed towards all beings, is pure-hearted, considers alike a stone and gold.

10. Never keeps in mind any insult received, is always aware of his duties and speaks only the truth.

11. Turns away from all falsehood, is firm in truth, never speaks ill of any one even privately,

12. Cohabits with his wife for the sake of progeny soon after her period, and is steadfast in my devotion.

13. Never goes to a bad womb, but reaches me.

O Earth, I shall tell you another thing. Please listen.

14. The eternal dharma of man is seen in one way by Manu, in another way by Āṅgirasa.

15. In yet another way by Śukra and still another way by Gautama, in a different way by Soma, still differently by Rudra.

16. Yet differently by Śaṅkha and more differently by Likhita, similarly by Kāśyapa and so too by Dharma.

17. Agni and Vāyu found *dharma* differently; so also Yama, Indra and Varuṇa.

18. Kubera found it in one way and Śāṇḍilya in another; Pulastya and Āditya still differently.

19. Pitṛs found it yet differently and Svayambhū too. Each propounder found it according to himself.

20. Each man should follow *dharma* according to his faith and should not dispute about it with others.

21. He should stand in the path of righteousness and should not despise virtuous deeds.

22. Such a person never falls into a heinous womb, but reaches my world.

Listen, O Earth, I shall now tell you about another thing.

23. By which people are able to cross this ocean of births.

24. He who has control of his senses, has overcome anger and is free from desire and delusion, helps himself by always

worshipping god, guests and preceptors, abstains from injury and does not partake of meat or liquor.

25. Who never even thinks of cohabiting with a Brahmin woman, makes gift of Kapilā cow to the Brahmin and attends on old men.

26. Does not discriminate among his own sons, consoles a Brahmin when he is angry.

27. Who touches the Kapilā cow in devotion, never outrages the modesty of a virgin, does not cross fire, and does not dispute with the son.

28. Does not pass urine in water, is respectful towards the teacher, is not talkative.

29. And endowed with such qualities (like these) resorts to me; he never goes to a womb, but reaches my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTWO

The greatness of Kokāmukha—the story of the fish and cricket

Varāha said:

1. "O Earth, listen to the secret of secrets by which even those that have become animals are cleared of all their sins.

2. He who maintains continence on the eighth and fourteenth days of each lunar fortnight, he who, having taken the food offered by another, does not speak ill of it.

3. Who even from childhood is devoted to me, who is happy with whatever he gets, who honours his parents.

4. He who does not live in strain, who is virtuous and discreet, liberal in gifts, enjoys life, restrained but independent in all actions.

5. Who, even in his youth, does not do anything prohibited, who is kind towards all beings, and is full of energy.

6. Who is of desireless mind and never covets another's wealth, such a person reaches my world.

7. O lovely damsel, this is a secret which is not easily comprehended even by gods. Listen to what I say further.

8. He who is sympathetic and does not harm any being and he who gives up life at Kokāmukha, becomes dear to me and he does not swerve even in mind".

9. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the saintly Earth asked the Lord who was in the form of a boar.

Earth said:

10. "O Mādhava, I am your disciple, servant and devotee. I deserve to be told the great secret.

11-12. Leaving out Cakra, Vārāṇasi, Aṭṭahāsa, Naimiṣa and Bhadrakarṇa, why do you praise Kokā.

13. Again, leaving out Dviraṇḍa, Maṇḍaleśvara and Kedāra, why do you praise Kokā ?

14. So too while there are Devadāruvana, Jāleśvara and Durga, why do you praise Kokā ?

15. Similarly, when there are Gokarṇa, Jālmeśvara and Ekaliṅga, why do you praise Kokā ?"

16. Thus asked in great reverence, the Lord in the form of the boar replied:

Varāha said:

17. What you say is true. I shall, therefore, tell you about the special nature of Kokāmukha.

18. All the places mentioned by you pertain to Rudra and they are resorted to by the Pāśupatas. But Kokā pertains to the Bhāgavatas.

19. I shall tell you what happened in this Kokāmukha of mine.

20. A hungry hunter was once wandering about in this Kokā country.

21. He saw in a shallow pond a fish and caught it in his net. But the mighty fish escaped from his hand.

22. Immediately a vulture saw it. It swooped down, caught it and swiftly flew away.

23. But the vulture was unable to carry it far, and the fish fell down at Kokāmukha. By the special power of that place, it became a handsome prince (in Śaka kingdom).

24. After a long time, the wife of this hunter happened to pass by there with meat in her hand.

25. A female cricket, desirous of the meat, hopped on it again and again and annoyed her.

26. She struck it with an arrow and hurled it down on the ground.

27. The cricket fell before me in Kokā, and she was born as a beautiful princess in Candrapura.

28. She duly grew up and mastered all the sixtyfour arts, but developed an aversion for men.

29-30. She disliked even a man who was highly virtuous, quite handsome and brave in war.

31. After a long time, however, she married a young Śaka.

32. Having thus got each other in wedlock, they lived a happy and virtuous life.

33. He never parted company with her and she never parted company with him. They never wasted even a minute.

34. A long time they spent in mutual love. She served him with humility and regard.

35. He too (enjoyed himself) in the same way.

36. Once, in the afternoon, the Śaka prince became afflicted by severe headache.

37. All the expert physicians tried their best with all their recipes, but the headache did not subside.

38. For a long time he was unable to know himself being deluded by the *māyā* of Viṣṇu.

39. The period (of their transformation into human form) was drawing to a close.

40. Still they were strongly attached to each other, and neither left the other even for a moment.

41. Then the beautiful princess asked her husband: "Are you doing well ? How is it that you are having this headache ?

42. Please tell me the truth, if you have any consideration for me.

43. Numerous expert physicians are treating you, but the headache still remains".

Thus asked by his wife, he said:

44. "Have you forgotten that the human life we are having now is a mixture of pleasure and pain.

45. You should not ask this question now that we are in the ocean of *saṁsāra*". So was that young lady spoken to by her husband.

46. After a long time, when both were sleeping, she again asked him:

47. "O my lord, please give me an answer to what I asked you long ago.

48. Is there anything to be hidden (from me)? Otherwise why do you hide facts. You should certainly tell me if I am your beloved".

49. Pressed thus, the Śaka prince told her out of love and regard:

50. "Give up this human form and remember what you were formerly. If you are interested in knowing about your previous life.

51. Please go to my parents and propitiate them. They are honourable and my mother kept me in her womb.

52. After honouring them and getting their consent, we will go to Kokāmukha and there I shall tell you the whole thing.

53. Although it is difficult even for gods to know about the previous life, I shall tell you about it there".

54. Then that beautiful damsel went to her parents-in-law and prostrated at their feet. She then told them:

55. "Please listen, I have a submission to make before you. With your permission, both of us wish to go to the holy Kokāmukha.

56. Since the purpose is serious, you should not object to this.

57. So far we have not asked of you anything. Therefore, it behoves you to grant the present request.

58. Your son is suffering from an incurable headache and at noon he becomes practically lifeless.

59. Because of this he has to forego all pleasures. There is no remedy for this other than going to Kokāmukha.

60. This secret has never been told to you. I wish to go quickly to that supreme abode of Viṣṇu. Contemplation by the husband and wife is always efficacious".

61. Then the great king of the Śakas, held his daughter-in-law by the hand and told his son:

62. "Why do you think of going to Kokāmukha?

63. You have got here elephants, horses, chariots and other

vehicles and women beautiful like Apsarases. This country with all its seven constituents like treasury and fort is all for you.

64. So too our friends and this throne. O son, take all this. My life rests in you, so too progeny".

65. Hearing these words of the father, the prince held his feet and spoke in humility.

66. "Enough of the kingdom, treasury, vehicles and army. I wish to go to Kokāmukha quickly.

67. Only if I survive after this terrible headache that has caught hold of me, can this kingdom, army and treasury be of any avail to me.

68. By going there my headache will surely disappear".

69. At these words of the son, the king of Śakas gave permission for him to go to Kokāmukha and blessed him.

70. The citizens, traders, beautiful ladies and courtesans followed him to Kokāmukha.

71. When they reached Kokāmukha, the princess asked her husband:

72. "Be pleased to tell me now what you promised to tell me at Kokāmukha, now that we have reached that place".

73. O Earth, when asked thus by the beloved, the prince laughed and embracing her said:

74. "Now night has fallen and let us sleep well. I shall tell you tomorrow all that is in my mind".

75. At daybreak both of them had their bath. They put on silk garments and bowed to Lord Viṣṇu. He then held her by the hand.

76. And pointed out at the north-east part the remains of some bones and said:

77. "These are the bones of my former body. I was then a fish moving about in the pond in this Kokā country.

78. I was caught in a net by a hunter, but I slipped out of his hand and fell down on the ground.

79. I was then caught by a vulture and torn by its nails. But when I was being carried away by it, I slipped again and fell down here.

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1. The seven constituents (*saptāṅga*) are the king, minister, kingdom, forts, treasury, army and friends.

80. My head hit the ground and thus developed this headache of mine. I alone know this and none else.

81. I have now told you what you asked. You may now go wherever you please".

82. Then that lady of faultless limbs and of a hue like the red lotus spoke to the husband again in a piteous tone:

83. "In order to know this, I did not disclose what I was in my former birth. Now I shall tell you that, please listen.

84. I was a cricket flying in the sky. Once overcome with hunger and thirst I was sitting on the branch of a tree thinking of my food.

85. Just then there came a hunter with a big mass of flesh of the many animals he had killed that day.

86. Placing the mass of flesh near his wife, he went to fetch firewood for cooking the flesh, as he was hungry.

87. When he kindled fire (and began cooking a part of the flesh), I swiftly flew there and began to cut the flesh (left with his wife).

88. But it was too heavy for me to carry away and so I remained there itself.

89. After eating the (cooked) flesh, the hunter was much pleased, but, not seeing the mass of flesh, looked for it everywhere.

90. Then he saw me eating the mass of flesh. At once he took his bow and discharged an arrow towards me.

91. The arrow hit me and hurled me down from the mass of flesh I was eating.

92. Then I moved about here and there practically dead.

93. But by the power of this holy place, I was born a princess and became your beloved with the memory of my former life.

94. See here the remains of the bones of my former body".

She told her husband again:

95. "O blessed soul, you have been brought to this Kokāmukha.

96. By the power of this place even animals get birth as human beings and in high families.

97. O famous prince, whatever *dharma* is there spoken by Viṣṇu, I follow, because that gives us supreme joy in the world of Viṣṇu".

98. At this narration, the prince was wonderstruck remembering the previous birth.

99. The princess, fully knowing what was to be done in that place, herself did certain rites fully devoted to her husband.

100. Hearing this, others also performed whatever prescribed rite that was to their liking.

101. Then the couple gave gifts of food and gems in great delight to deserving Brahmins.

102. Others who were given presents, also gave them to Brahmins because of their devotion to Viṣṇu.

103. Remaining there steadfast in devotion they went to Śvetadvīpa (the white island).

104. The prince also, following the tenets of my worship, cast off his human form and reached Śvetadvīpa. All the people there realise their own selves.

105. They are all clad in white, adorned with divine jewels, effulgent, tall and fine-looking.

106. The women also have divine jewels, are resplendent and pure, and absorbed in contemplating on me.

107. Thus have I told you about the matchless Kokāmukha where the fish and the cricket attained each other.

108. Some may perform the Cāndrāyaṇa ceremony, some may live on water alone. But every Brahmin shall follow the *dharma* laid down by Viṣṇu.

109. Even those couples who have a lot of grain and gems, perform the rites laid down by me for my devotees.

110-111. All those who move about serving me, go to the Śvetadvīpa after death by the power of the place, the power of their deeds and my own power.

112. So it was that the prince also went there after giving up his human form.

113. Even his servants who were devoted to me cast off their mortal frame and reached my world.

114. There all are resplendent and every one realises the self.

115. All the women there have the smell of the lotus, are free from *māyā* and in the company of their beloved persons. They reach Śvetadvīpa due to my blessing.

116. This is virtue, this is fame, this is power, this is renown.

117. This is the greatest of actions, the highest of penances, the best of narratives and the worthiest of deeds.

118. I have now told you about the highest of *dharmas*. This should not be told to a choleric, a fool or a jealous person.

119. Nor should it be told to a non-devotee, the unlistening or the arrogant. It should be imparted only to the calm and the initiated.

120. It should not be imparted to the disputing man even if he is learned.

121. He who remembers this at the time of death, gets removed of all sins and never takes birth again.

122. I have thus told you, O Earth, this great and inv gorating story. Those who go to Kokāmukha attain supreme bliss as did the fish and the cricket.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTHREE

The greatness of flowers, sandalpaste etc.

Sūta said:

1. On hearing about the greatness of Kokā with its emphasis on *dharma*, the Earth became wonderstruck.

Earth said:

2. "How wonderful the greatness of Kokā narrated by lord Varāha, that even animals attain supreme bliss.

3-4. Now, O lord, by your grace I wish to know what I have already asked you, namely, by what *dharma*, penance or action can people see your benign face ?"

5. Requested thus by the goddess Earth, the lord laughed and began to tell her:

Varāha said:

6. "What you ask is quite proper. I shall tell you that secret which leads to release from *saṁsāra*.

7. When the rainy season is over and the autumn sets in with the sky clear and the moon fully bright.

8. With the weather neither hot nor cold, when the swans sing in delight and the smell of the lotus, lily and kalhāra spreads.

9. There on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Kumuda, (Kārttika) if one worships me, what merit he attains I shall tell you.

10. O Earth, such a person becomes my devotee and not of any other so long as these worlds last.

11. Performing actions relating to me on Dvādaśī day he shall utter the following mantra for my worship:

12. "You are praised by Brahmā and Rudra. You are adorable and adored by the sages. Dvādaśī has come. Awake, arise. The clouds are gone. The moon is full. O lord of the worlds, I offer you the flowers of autumn for the sake of *dharma*. For worshipping you who have arisen, sacrifices are performed, the Vedas are recited by the awakened, O lord of the worlds".

13. Doing in this way on Dvādaśī day, my devotees attain supreme bliss.

14. Thus have I told you about the autumnal action aimed at getting release from *saṁsāra* for my devotees.

Thus is the action of awakening.

15. I shall now tell you about the actions to be performed in winter by doing which the devotees attain supreme bliss.

16. Although tormented by cold winds, remaining firm in devotion and with unchanging mind.

17-18. Worshipping me with the flowers available in winter, kneeling down on the floor and with folded hands, the following mantra is to be uttered:

19. "O lord of the worlds, you are winter, the snow is impenetrable and uncrossable. Lead me out of this *saṁsāra*, O lord of the three worlds".

20. He who performs worship with this mantra in full devotion, attains supreme bliss.

21. O Earth, I shall tell you another thing, please listen.

22. The month Mārgaśiras is very dear to me; so too the month Vaiśākha. I shall tell you the result of offering flowers to me then.

23. He who makes offerings to me then with a steady mind, goes to Viṣṇuloka and remains there for nine thousand nine hundred years.

24. The offering of even a single turmeric produces great effect. So one should wisely offer turmeric and flowers.

I shall tell you more about the efficacy of turmeric.

25-26. During the three months Kaumuda, Mārgaśīrṣa and Vaiśākha, he who offers me with constant mind the *vanamālā* of beautiful flowers and sweet sandal on the Dvādaśī days.

27. Attains the merit of worshipping me for twelve years.

28. In Kaumuda the flower of Śāla with sandal, in Mārgaśiras the flower of lotus with sandal (are important in my worship). Thus have I told you about the result of worship with turmeric".

29. After hearing all this, Earth laughed and then spoke to him in all humility.

30. "O lord, there are twelve months (consisting of) three hundred and sixty days. Of these why two (months) alone are particularly praised by you, and even there why Dvādaśī alone?"

31. Asked thus by the Earth, he laughed and told her words of *dharma*.

32. "O goddess, I shall tell you why these two are particularly dear to me.

33. (Worship of Dvādaśī day) is more important than all sacrifices. By this one attains the same result as by giving gifts of land to a thousand Brahmins.

34. I wake up in the month of Kaumuda and remain alert in Vaiśākha.

35. O Earth, these remove all ailments and, therefore, with steady mind in Kaumuda and Vaiśākha, one should take turmeric in the hand and utter the mantra:

36-37. "O lord, command me. Vaiśākha and Kārttika are eternally great. Accept this turmeric and increase all *dharma*. Bow to Nārāyaṇa", and then make the offering.

38. I shall now tell you about the qualities and results of offering flowers. After turmeric, one should take flowers in the hand and say 'Om, bow to Vāsudeva' and then utter the following mantra:

39. "O lord, command me. Make my mind favourable to worship you with these flowers. Accept them with sandalpaste. I bow to you".

40. He who worships me offering me these, never again takes birth, is never fatigued and never feels hungry.

41. He remains in my world for a thousand divine years.

42. Such is the effect of each flower offered. Such is the greatness that arises from flowers and sandal about which you asked.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFOUR

Worship in the Seasons

Varāha said:

1. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna, the devotee should collect the fragrant flowers blooming in spring.

2. Flowers that are white or pale yellow and auspicious and offer them in the prescribed manner with a pleasant mind.

3. This ritual relating to the great God is to be done by one who knows the rules and rituals and is clean.

4. This is to be done according to rules and uttering the prescribed mantra and with pure mind.

5. First should be uttered 'Om, I bow to Nārāyaṇa' and then the mantra: "I bow to you, the lord of Devas, holding the conch, disc and mace; I bow to you, the lord of the worlds; I bow to you, the great hero.

6. Splendid is the spring season with the trees full of fragrant and honeyed flowers".

7. He, who worships in this manner in the month of Phālguna, goes to my world and is never born again.

8. I shall now tell you the result of worship on the Dvādaśī day of the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha which you asked about.

9. When the Śālas and other trees are in full bloom, the devotee should collect the flowers of the Śāla for my worship.

10. Performing the rituals and honouring other devotees, he should lay them before me.

11. O Earth, the sages praise with Vedic mantras. Gandharvas and Apsarases sing and play instruments and dance.

12. The entire celestial world praises this most ancient and best Man. The Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Yakṣas, Piśācas, Uragas (snakes) and Rākṣasas praise the god of all beings and the lord of all worlds.

13. The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Aśvins and Maruts praise the god of gods who alone remains when everything else disappears.

14. Then Vāyu, Viśvedevas and Aśvins praise lord Keśava who remains from the most early times.

15. Then Brahmā, Soma, Indra and Agni come together and praise the lord of all worlds.

16-17. Nārada, Parvata, Asita, Devala, Pulastya, Pulaha, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras and many other sages like Mitrāvasu and Parāvasu, praise the lord of all beings and the greatest of yogins.

18. Hearing the reverberating sound of the praise by Devas, lord Nārāyaṇa told Earth:

19. "Do you hear this sound mixed with the recitation of the Vedas ? Do you hear the sound of Devas ?"

20. The lotus-eyed Earth endowed with all forms and qualities replied to the lord in the form of the boar:

21. "O lord, Devas desire that this boar form of yours be there for ever and they are all engaged towards that end".

22. Then lord Nārāyaṇa told Earth: "I know that they have come here seeking this.

23. I have held you, with ease at the tip of one of my tusks, O Earth, for a thousand divine years.

24. And you are quite safe. To see this have come here the celestials, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Skanda, Indra and Brahmā".

25. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, Earth fell down at his feet with hands folded over the head.

26. She then requested the great lord in the form of the boar: "I who sank deep in the netherworld was raised by you.

27. I seek refuge in you as your devotee. You are my lord and saviour. What is *Karma* ? By what *karma* can life's aim be achieved ?

28. How can you be propitiated ? By what action can you be worshipped ? I wish to do that which will be conducive to my happiness.

29. Being engaged in your service, I never feel fatigue or strain, nor do old age and birth and death affect me.

30. Where do the gods, demons and people, as also Rudra, Indra and Brahmā remain in pleasure ?

31. What actions do those perform that realise you, O Mâdhava ? What food do they take and what practices do they follow ?

32. What should be the actions of the Brahmins, what should be the actions of the Kṣatriyas ? What actions should the Vaiśyas do and what the Śūdras ?

33. By whom is yoga attained, by whom penance ? What result does he attain who is devoted to you ?

34. What should be the nature of living of your devotees ? What food shall they take and what drink ? What is the nature of their actions ?

35. Which directions do they take ? How can they attain cessation from birth, particularly in a despicable family ?

36. By what action can they avoid being born as animals ? Tell me all this by which they attain happiness ?

37. By what action can they avoid old age and rebirth, O Acyuta ? By the power of which action can they get relief from *saṁsāra* ?"

38. Thus requested by Earth, the lord replied.

39. "Know how my devotees are led to the path of liberation and what mantras please me.

40. The mantra: "O Mādhava, you are indeed the month Mādhava which is the chief of all months. May you be seen in the spring season when approached with sandal-paste. Lord Nārāyaṇa who is the greatest hero in all the seven worlds and ever present in sacrifices is invoked".

41. In summer also worship should be done as I have directed, and the following mantra, which is for the good of all devotees, should be uttered:

42. "In summer occurs the most important of months. May you be seen, O lord, in summer so that all my sufferings may cease".

43. O lovely damsel, my worship is to be performed in this way in summer so that there may not be any more births or deaths (for the devotee).

44. As long as there are flowering trees and sweet smelling objects like sandal, so long I may be worshipped in this manner.

45. In the rainy season also my worship may be performed. By this the intellect becomes pure and the soul never becomes subject to *saṁsāra*.

46. I shall tell you another thing conducive to release from *saṁsāra*.

47. After consecrating me, I should be ritualistically worshipped using the buds of Kadamba tree and the flowers of Sarala and Arjuna. The mantra *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* (Bow to Nārāyaṇa) should be uttered and then:

48. "The blessed people who contemplate on you and worship you find you of the hue of the cloud. May you enter into sleep, O lord of the worlds, during this rainy season seeing the colour of the cloud".

49. He who performed my worship on Dvādaśī day in the month of Āṣāḍha, never falls into *saṁsāra* at any time.

50. I have thus told you about the worship in the different seasons, by which the devotees cross *saṁsāra*.

51. This secret is not known even to the gods, other than lord Nārāyaṇa in this form of the boar.

52. This should not be communicated to the uninitiated, the uneducated or the envious, nor to an undeserving disciple or one who finds fault with scripture.

53. This should not be read to those who slaughter cows or those who are wicked, as it will result in rapid loss of wealth and virtue.

54. It should be read only to devotees and those who are wedded to *dharma*.

55. I have thus told you what you desired to know in full, what else do you ask me?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFIVE

Māyācakra

Sūta said:

1. After listening to the actions to be performed in the six seasons, Earth again asked Lord Nārāyaṇa.

2. "You have explained the auspicious and sacred actions to be performed, that indeed gladden your mind.

3. Knowing these from you, O Mādhava, I have become free from stain like the moon in autumn.

4. I am now eager to know another secret which you may be pleased to enlighten me about, namely.

5. What is it that you speak of as my *māyā* (illusory power); what is its nature, O Viṣṇu.

6. I wish to know this great secret, namely the meaning of *Māyā*."

7. Viṣṇu, who is the very repository of *māyā*, laughed a little at this, and then told Earth:

8. "You ask this quite earnestly, but why do you ask this since you see it yourself?

9. But know this that even Rudra, Indra and Brahmā have not known me fully even now; then how can you, O Earth, know my *Māyā* ?

10. Where the clouds shower rain, there water accumulates, but there are also places without any water. This is due to my *māyā*.

11. The moon wanes in one fortnight and waxes in the next, and does not appear at all on new moon day. This is really due to my *māyā*.

12. In winter, the water in the well is warm, but in summer it is cool. This really is due to my *māyā*.

13. The sun sets in the west and rises in the east the next morning. This is due to my *māyā*.

14. The generative fluid is in the female and the semen is in the male. In the womb they combine to form a being. This is due to my *māyā*.

15. The soul entering the embryo knows pleasure and pain, but when once born, it forgets the whole thing. This is due to my *māyā*.

16. The soul depends upon its own actions, but is quite unaware of it and is free from desire. But by its actions it is led elsewhere. This is due to my *māyā*.

17. Living beings are born (in the human and animal world) by the combination of semen of the male and the generative fluid of the female.

18. The fingers, feet, hands, head, waist, hip, belly, teeth, lips, nose, ears, eyes, cheeks, forehead and tongue, all these are produced in association with my *māyā*.

19. By the same *māyā* do they deteriorate like fire transforming the food eaten and the liquids drunk.

20. Sound, touch, colour, taste and smell all act in a living being due to food. All this is by my *māyā*.

21. The cause of the effects on stationary and mobile objects in each season is not known because of my *māyā*, O fair damsel.

22. The celestial waters as well as terrestrial waters by which the rivers are flooded are all due to my *māyā*.

23. During the rainy season, all ponds and lakes are full of water, but in summer season, they all dry up. This is due to the power of my *māyā*.

24. The river arising from the peak of Himavān with the name Mandākinī and flowing in earth with the name Gaṅgā is because of my *māyā*.

25. The clouds drawing water from the saline ocean and showering it on the land as sweet water is due to my *māyā*.

26. Beings afflicted by disease take in medicine. The efficacy of such medicines is due to my *māyā*.

27. That in spite of medicine, a being sometimes dies is because of the fact I take it away making the medicine ineffective.

28. First the embryo is formed, then the child is born, afterwards he becomes a youth and finally becomes old. In due course the senses are lost. All this is due to my *māyā*.

29. The seed sown in the field sprouts and then gets foliage. by my *māyā*.

30. From a single (aggregate) seed grow numerous plants and they all become perennial because of my *māyā*.

31. People say that Garuḍa is the vehicle of Lord Viṣṇu. Really I become Garuḍa and bear myself.

32. Different gods are made to be pleased by the offerings in sacrifices. Really it is I that please them by my *māyā*.

33. All people believe that the gods always eat the sacrificial offerings. Really the sacrifices propitiating the gods are due to my *māyā*.

34. All people consider Bṛhaspati as the sacrificer. Actually it is I that do the sacrifice by my *māyā Āṅgirasi*.

35. All people believe that Varuṇa protects the sea. It is I that protect the sea by my *māyā Vāruṇi*.

36. All people take it that Kubera is the lord of wealth. It is I that protect that wealth by my *Kuberamāyā*.

37. All people think that Vṛtra was killed by Indra. Vṛtra was really killed by me by *Aindri māyā*.

38. All people believe that the sun remains constant by itself. But the fact is that by producing Meru by my *māyā*, I hold the sun.

39-40. All people take it that water (in the ocean) is consumed (by the submarine fire). Really it is I that sit at the mouth of Baḍavā (the submarine fire) and consume the water. And by producing wind by my *māyā*, the water is lodged in the clouds.

41. All people ask "Where is water deposited ?" Even the gods do not know where *amṛta* remains. By my *māyā* the medicine remains (in the herbs) in the forest.

42. All people think that it is the king who protects his subjects. It is I that really rule the earth by producing *Rājamāyā*.

43. Twelve suns appear at the time of deluge. I enter them, O Earth, and create *māyā* in the world.

44. O Earth, it is by (the heat of) rays of the sun that all cooking is made possible. But it is really my Aṁśumayī *māyā* in the form of these rays.

45. The Saṁvarta clouds (at the time of deluge) pour down water in torrents. It is really I that fill the world with water by my *māyā sāṁvartiki*.

46. O Earth, that I repose over the serpent Śeṣa is because of my Anantamāyā.

47. What I do by *Varāhamāyā* you already know.

48. Do you not know that the Devas are all enveloped by my *Vaiṣṇavi māyā* ?

49. O beautiful damsel, I have raised you up from the big ocean and held you (in my tusk) seventeen times by my *māyā*.

50. That I remain in this water is also due to my *māyā*.

51. I create Brahmā and Rudra and hold them. But due to the power of my *māyā* they do not know it.

52. The group of Pitṛs resplendent like the sun, I hold by my *Pitṛmayī māyā* ultimately, but apparently by you.

53. I shall now tell you how by the power of *māyā* a sage was made to enter the womb of a woman".

54. Extremely eager to hear this, Earth said with folded hands.

55. "What was the difficult task done by that sage that gave him womanhood and was made to enter a woman's womb ?

56. I am very much curious to know this. What was the sinful action of the great Brahmin that brought him womanhood ?"

57. Hearing the words of Earth, Lord Viṣṇu was very much pleased and spoke to her in sweet words.

58. "O lovely goddess, listen to this. By my exciting *māyā Rohiṇī*, Somaśarmā was tormented.

59. He had numerous lives exalted, ordinary and despicable, but became a Brāhmaṇa again because of my *māyā*.

60. That he was led to the womb of a woman was not because of any prohibited action or offending deed of his.

61. He was always worshipping me and performing deeds that would please me. He was always meditating on my attractive form.

62. After a long time, I was very much pleased with his penance, devotion and unchanging mind.

63. I then appeared before him and asked him to seek a boon.

64. I said: "O Brahmin, ask of me anything you have in mind, gems, gold, cows or even a kingdom free from trouble.

65. If you desire heaven where you get all pleasures, beautiful women and gems and gold in abundance,

66. And where there are celestial Apsarases, I shall give you".

67. Hearing my words, the Brahmin prostrated before me and said:

68. "If you will not feel angry, I shall tell you what boon I desire now that you have offered me many things to choose from.

69. I don't desire gold, cows, women or kingdom; nor do I desire Apsarases or abundant wealth.

70. I do not wish even one among the thousand heavens. I wish to know only about your *Māyā* by which you play".

71. Hearing his words, I spoke to him: 'O virtuous Brahmin, what have you to do with *Māyā*? Why do you ask about this irrelevant thing?

72. Deluded by *Viṣṇumāyā*, even the gods do not know about it".

73. Hearing my words, the great Brahmin spoke being induced by *māyā*:

74. "If you are pleased with me, O great god, by my actions or penance, give me the boon I have asked".

75. Then I asked that ascetic Brahmin to go to the place called Kubjāmraka on the bank of the river Gaṅgā and take bath there in order to know *Māyā*. He then circumambulated me and went there.

76. O goddess, at Kubjāmraka he carefully placed on the bank his staff, vessel and bundle of cloth.

77. Then performing the prescribed rites for the bath, he got down on the river.

78. As soon as his whole body was immersed in water, he found himself in the womb of a woman in a hunter's hut.

79. Troubled by being deposited there, he thought: "what a pity ! what bad deed did I do that I am now in the hell of the womb of the wife of a hunter?

80. Fie on my penance, fie on my righteous deeds, fie on the effects of these, fie on my life, that now I am placed in the womb of this wife of the hunter full of filth.

81. With three hundred bones, nine openings, full of urine and faecal matter and flesh and blood.

82. Foul smelling, unbearable, full of air, phlegm and bile, with numerous diseases.

83. Or why say all this? I am undergoing a lot of suffering.

84. Where is Viṣṇu? Where am I? Where is Gaṅgā? Having been placed in this womb, I have to face all the consequences".

85. While he was thinking like this, he was cast out of the womb, and falling on the earth, he lost all his reminiscence.

86. The Brahmin was born as a girl in the hunter's house which, however, was affluent.

87. Being deluded by the *māyā* of Viṣṇu, the girl did not remember anything (about her previous life).

88. In due time she was well married and she begot sons and daughters.

89. She ate permitted as well as prohibited food and drank permitted as well as prohibited drink. She also killed several creatures.

90. Deluded by *māyā* she could not discriminate between good and bad actions or good and bad utterances; so too between permitted and forbidden contacts.

91. After fifty years, I decided to call back that Brahmin (now living as the hunter's wife).

92. In order to wash dirty cloth, she went to the Ganges with a pot and, placing the cloth and the pot on the bank, plunged into the water.

93. When she dipped herself into the river being oppressed by heat and sweat, she was retransformed into the ascetic Brahmin holding the staff and vessel.

94. He found himself holding the staff and the vessel. He could see the bundle of cloth he had placed formerly on the bank.

95. When knowledge dawned upon him as before, he was able to know the power of the *māyā* of Viṣṇu.

96. He took his original clothes from there and began, as before, his yogic practice sitting on the sands of Ganges.

97. Then he understood himself and also what happened. He cursed himself for having done heinous things.

98. He felt sorry for the loss of his *ācāra* in the despicable life he was subjected to.

99. (He repented:) "I was born in the family of a hunter. I ate forbidden food. I killed many creatures, terrestrial, celestial and aquatic.

100. I drank forbidden drinks and traded on prohibited things. The prohibitions relating to contacts and utterances were not observed by me.

101. Doubtless I ate in the home discarded food. I gave birth to sons and daughters begot in me by the hunter.

102. What a crime have I done? But who thinks of this

that I have been brought to this state of being the wife of a hunter ?"

103. In the meantime the hunter became angry and came to that Māyātīrtha in the Ganges together with his children.

104. He searched there for his devoted and beautiful wife and asked every ascetic he saw there about her.

105. (He wailed:) "O my dear, where have you gone leaving me and the children at home ? The little girl cries for breast-milk".

106. (He asked the sages:) "Did you find my wife who came to the bank of the Ganges with a pot in hand to fetch water" ?

107. People flocked there and they saw the ascetic with the pot near him.

108. Seeing the cloth and the pot and not the wife, the hunter was grief-stricken and he lamented a lot.

109. "The cloth and pot are left on the bank of the river, but my wife who took them here is not to be seen.

110. Can it be that some crocodile snatched her away for delicious food.

111. I never spoke to her anything harsh even in dream.

112. Perhaps she is devoured by some spirit, goblin or demon. Or some (sudden) disease caught hold of her when she entered the river (and she became senseless and was carried away by the stream).

113. What bad thing did I do in my former life that my wife met with her end this way ?

114. O my dear wife who used to follow my mind always, look at these pitiable children moving about in fear here and there.

115. Look at me, my dear, and the three little sons and the four daughters.

116. The boys cry to see you. The daughters seek your help. How cursed am I !

117. You certainly know that I am hungry and thirsty. Please be kind to assuage my grief".

118. To the hunter who was wailing like this and was restlessly moving about, the Brahmin said without going near him.

119. "After being with you and giving you pleasure, she has departed never to return.

120. Go away without uselessly lamenting any more. Bring up these children with the necessary food. They should never be given up".

121. Hearing these words of the ascetic, the grief-stricken hunter said in soft tone :

122. "O great sage, the upholder of *dharma*, I am really consoled by your sweet words".

123-124. When the hunter spoke thus, the ascetic spoke again feeling great pity for him.

125. "Please don't cry. I shall tell you the truth. It was I that was your wife. When I came to the bank of this Ganges, I was transformed like this."

126. Hearing the words of the ascetic, the hunter felt much consoled and spoke to him again.

127. "O Brahmin, what do you say? This is mystifying. How can a woman be transformed into a man?"

128. The Brahmin felt very sad at this and told that fish-hunter softly.

129. "Go to your house with these children and give them the attention they deserve".

130. In spite of the persuation of the Brahmin, the hunter was at a loss to know, and so asked him again.

131. "What wrong had you done in the past that you became a woman, as you say, and how did it happen?

132. And having become a woman, by whatever fault, how did you become a man again? Please tell me".

133. At this the ascetic replied to that fish-hunter in the Māyātīrtha in Ganges.

134. "O hunter, hear my story. Really I did not do anywhere anything which I should not have done.

135. I was taking food only once a day and that too was never of any prohibited article. Janārdana (Viṣṇu) the lord of the worlds, was worshipped by me by various rites with a view to seeing Him.

136. After a long time, Janārdana appeared before me and asked me to seek a boon.

137. I did not, however, desire any boon and requested that I may be shown his *Māyā*.

138. The lord told me: "Enough of *māyā*, O Brahmin (Ask

something else'". But I insisted on the *māyā* being shown to me.

139. Then he said that I will know what *māyā* is and asked me to take bath in the Ganges at the place called Kubjāmraka.

140. Anxious to know about *māyā*, I immediately went there, and placing my staff, vessel and cloth on the bank, dipped myself in the river after performing the due rites.

141. I am unable to know what happened then. But I was born as a hunter's daughter and became your wife.

142. For some reason I entered the Ganges again and I become the old ascetic again.

143. See here my old vessel, staff and cloth. Though this is after fifty years, the river Ganges has kept them all intact".

144. As he said this, the hunter disappeared and none of his children could be seen there.

145. O Earth, the Brahmin then performed penance with upward breath and arms held upwards and living on air alone.

146. In the afternoon he offered water ritualistically.

147. Sitting in the Vīrāsana pose, he worshipped me with the prescribed flowers.

148. The Brahmins going for bath in the Ganges asked him.

149. "In the forenoon you placed your bundle, cloth and vessel here, and went to the fishermen (hunters). Did you forget this that you did not return soon ?"

150. Hearing these words of the Brahmins, the ascetic simply remained quiet, contemplating on the self.

151. Then, O goddess, the Brahmin thought: "Now fifty years are over and it is Amāvāsyā today.

152. Then why do these Brahmins say that I left these things here just this forenoon ?"

153. Just then I appeared before him and asked him.

154. "Why are you stupefied ? What have you seen ? Finding you perplexed, I came here".

155. Asked thus by me, he prostrated before me and told me with great distress, frequently heaving.

156. "O preceptor of the whole world, these Brahmins tell me that I left this staff, this vessel and this cloth here in the forenoon and I returned in the afternoon and whether I forgot them.

156 (a) Actually I was born as daughter to a hunter, was married to another hunter and remained in that state for fifty years.

157. I bore three sons and three daughters by him probably as a result of my misdeed in earlier lives.

158-59. Once I happened to go to the Ganges for bath and when I dipped myself in it, leaving my cloth bundle on the bank, I became converted into the Brahmin again.

160. What fault did I commit when I was worshipping you or performing penance?

161. Did I eat any prohibited food or commit any error in worship to you?

162. Please tell me the truth as to why I had this hell? Please know that I am extremely tormented by these thoughts.

163. I was eager to know about *māyā* and so I asked you about it. I do not remember to have committed any sin to be put to hell like this".

164. Noting his pitiable lament, I told the distressed Brahmin:

165. "O Brahmin, don't be sorry. There is no fault in you nor have you committed any error in worship by which you were afflicted and made to have a ninferior birth.

166. I asked you formerly to seek a boon, but you chose to have knowledge of *māyā*.

167. I offered you heavenly pleasures or worldly pleasures if such was your desire. But you wanted to get the knowledge of *māyā*.

168. You have, therefore, seen *Vaiṣṇavī māyā* according to your desire. There is no day, no afternoon nor the life of yours in the hunter's house for fifty years.

169. I shall tell you another thing about the *Vaiṣṇavī māyā* which you desired to know.

170. You did neither good nor bad. Everything is due to *māyā* which stupefies all.

171. You have not done any bad action or swerved from the proper path. Nor have you committed anything wrong in worship or in penance.

172. The suffering you were subjected to was the result of your actions in previous birth. I shall tell you about it.

173. This predicament of yours was the result of the sin incurred by your failing to revere the Brahmins who were devoted to me.

174. My devotees are really my own manifestations. Those who honour such Brahmins really honour me. I am known by them.

175. People should know that my devotees deserve to be worshipped by those desiring to attain me.

176. Particularly in Kali age, I am manifest in Brahmins. Therefore, those who honour Brahmins do really honour me.

177. He who is irreproachable and desires to attain me, let him turn his attention towards my devotees.

178. O Brahmin, you have now accomplished your desire. When you die, you will surely reach my place, Śvetadvīpa".

179. So saying, the lord disappeared. The Brahmin too cast off his mortal coil at Māyātīrtha and reached Śvetadvīpa.

180. By the power of *māyā* he attained bow, arrow, quiver and sword and supreme valour and remains always seeing me.

181. O Earth, why do you ask about *māyā*? You cannot know *māyā*. My *māyā* is incomprehensible even to gods and Rākṣasas.

182. I have now told you about this mighty *māyā*. This is called 'Māyācakra' and it brings about good.

183. This is the greatest of all narratives, the highest of penance, the best of merits and the most important of all paths.

184. This should be narrated to devotees and not to non-devotees. This should not be recited in the midst of the bad or those who find fault with scripture.

185. The Brahmin should recite it before devotees, and not before those who dishonour scripture.

186. O Earth, he who recites it with due adoration, attains result equivalent to reciting it a dozen times in my presence.

187. And at the end of his full life, becomes my perpetual devotee and never takes birth in any inferior family.

188. He, who listens to this great story also, is never born dull and never takes birth in any inferior family.

189. I have thus told you what you desired to know. What else do you wish to ask?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYSIX

The greatness of Kubjāmraka—the story of the serpent and ichneumon

1. Hearing about the power of Māyā from the lord, Earth asked Varāha again:

Earth said:

2. What you have to say about Kubjāmraka is endless, I know. But I am not able to grasp well even what you have said.

3. You may, therefore, tell me about the sacredness and glory of Kubjāmraka.

Varāha said:

4. I shall tell you all this which is conducive to the welfare of the world at large, the glory of Kubjāmraka and holy spots there.

5. Hear this in full, O goddess, how this Kubjāmraka came into being and about the holy places there, and also what accrues to a person who bathes or dies there.

6. O Earth, in the seventeenth aeon when the whole earth was one mass.

7. And after killing the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha according to the desire of Brahmā and collecting all the waters together for my repose.

8. I was not able to see sage Raibhya who was deep in my devotion, scrupulously performing all the prescribed actions.

9. Very intelligent, virtuous, pure, clever, who had controlled all his senses, who performed penance with upraised hands for one thousand years.

10. Another thousand years by living on water alone and then for five hundred years on moss.

11. I was very much pleased by the supreme devotion of Raibhya and I was well worshipped by him.

12. Then I saw that great sage performing penance at the foot of a mango tree on the bank of the Ganges.

13. This was pointed out to me by some one, but when I came near that mango tree, he became a dwarf.

14. This place thus came to be called 'Kubjāmraka' (the place of the mango with the dwarf). People who die there go to my world.

15. I shall tell you another thing, O Earth, namely what that sage said.

16. When I saw him as a dwarf, he crawled towards me with his knees and began to speak.

17. Seeing him bow to me, I was much pleased and I offered him a boon.

18. Hearing my words, that virtuous sage spoke sweet words.

19. "If you, O lord Janārdana, are so pleased, may you remain in this place for ever.

20. I pray you to be here as long as the world lasts.

21. This is the one boon which I have in mind. May you grant this if you are pleased.

22. May I have devotion for you always. I do not wish to have devotion for any one else".

23. Hearing these words of sage Raibhya, I said "Let it be as you desire".

24. Then, O Earth, the Brahmin said after contemplating for a while:

25. "O protector of the worlds, I wish to know from you about the greatness of this great *tīrtha*.

26. As well as of the other tīrthas in this place."

27. (I said then:) "O Brahmin, I shall tell you what you wish to know.

28. In this holy and pleasant Kubjāmraka there is a *tīrtha* with the shape of a lily, by the mere bath in which people attain heaven.

29. In the months Kaumuda, Mārgaśīrṣa and Vaiśākha, after austerities.

30. One who ends one's life here attains heaven, be the person a man, woman or eunuch.

31. I shall tell you about another, O Earth. Please listen. That is the *tīrtha* known as Mānasa.

32. By bathing in this, one goes to the divine garden Nandana and enjoys there with Apsarases for a thousand divine years.

33. At the end of this period of thousand years, he is born in a big family with abundant wealth and virtues.

34. If he dies there on the Dvādaśī day in Kaumuda, he attains great merit and reaches my world.

35. I shall tell you about another. Please listen, O Earth. It is known as Māyātīrtha by which people understand *māyā*.

36. By bathing there, one attains great fame and remains my devotee for ten thousand years.

37. Gets abundant wealth and reaches the abode of Kubera. He gets the capacity to go wherever he likes for a thousand years.

38. If one dies in the Māyātīrtha, he becomes a *māyāyogin* and reaches my world.

39. I shall now tell you, O Earth, about Sarvatīrtha which has the efficacy of all *tīrthas*.

40. By bathing there on the Dvādaśī day of Vaiśākha month, one enjoys heaven for fifteen thousand years.

41. If one gives up life there giving up all attachment, one attains my world.

42. O fair goddess, I shall tell you now about the little known *tīrtha* called Pūrṇasukha.

43. While the whole of the river Ganges is cool, in Pūrṇamukha it is warm.

44. By bathing in this, one goes to the world of Soma and remains there for fifteen thousand years.

45. Then he is dropped from heaven and takes birth as a Brahmin, pure, clever and a devotee of mine endowed with all good qualities.

46. If he dies there on Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Mārgaśīrṣa, he goes to my world.

47. And finds me there in my effulgent form with four hands. He will have no more births or deaths.

48. O Earth, listen to my account of another *tīrtha* with full concentration.[1]

49. If a person with unflinching devotion for me bathes in this tīrtha at any time, he goes to heaven and remains there for ten thousand years.

50. At the termination of his period in heaven, he is born again as a virtuous and wealthy devotee.

51. After severe austerities, if one gives up life here on Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Vaiśākha.

52. One will have no more birth or death, nor langour or fear, and becoming free from all attachments, goes to my world.

53. I shall now tell you, O Earth, about the *tīrtha* called Karavīra which brings about happiness to all.

1. The name of the tirtha is not given. Presumably it is Amaratirtha.

54. I shall tell you about its characteristics by which it may be known.

55. If the man with knowledge and devoted to me, on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha, when the Karavīra plant (oleander) is full of flowers.

56. Takes bath in it in midday after the prescribed rituals, gets the power to move and live anywhere travelling in a divine car with a thousand women dancing in attendance.

57. If one dies there on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha, he sees me, Brahmā and Śiva.

58. O Earth, I shall tell you about another *tīrtha* which I formerly told to that Brahmin.

59. That is called Puṇḍarīka, and this is particularly dear to me in Kubjāmraka.

60. I shall tell you about its characteristics by which it may be 'identified.

61. At noon on Dvādaśī day there moves in it a tortoise as big as a chariot's wheel. Listen to what I have to say about it.

62. Bathing there confers the same merit as performing the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice. There need be no doubt in this.

63. If one happens to die there, he regains consciousness, becomes famous.

64. And after enjoying the merit of performing ten Puṇḍarīka sacrifices, becomes highly purified and ascetic.

65. Gains great attainments and gets a permanent place in my world.

66. I shall tell you about another. Please listen. That is the Agnitīrtha in Kubjāmraka, proclaimed as efficacious for the sinless on Dvādaśī day.

67-68. The Dvādaśī in the bright half of the months of Kaumuda, Mārgaśīrṣa, Āṣāḍha and Mādhava are particularly important for this.

69. I shall tell you the characteristics by which this *tīrtha* of mine can be identified.

70. So you listen with attention. None other than the pure Bhāgavatas who master my *Saṁhitās* know the *Śāstra* relating to me.

71. I ask you again to listen, for I am going to tell you about the result accruing by bathing or dying there.

72. The man who bathes in Agnitīrtha in Kubjāmrka which is a Vaiṣṇava tīrtha of great efficacy.

73. Attains the merit equivalent to that of seven Agnimedha sacrifices.

74-75. If one dies there on Dvādaśī day after remaining there for twenty days, he reaches my world.

76. I shall tell you about the characteristics of this tīrtha which it can be known (as I already promised).

77. During the hot season it is cool, and during the cold season it is warm. Such is this Āgneyatīrtha, O Earth, and through this people are able to cross the ocean of the woes of worldly life.

78. I shall now tell you about another *tīrtha* in Kubjāmraka, called Vāyavyatīrtha which arose from *dharma*.

79. He who bathes there after performing the daily ablutions, attains the merit of Vājapeya sacrifice.

80. If anyone dies in this Vāyutīrtha after performing worship for fifteen days, he will not have birth or death again in this world.

81. He becomes four-armed and remains in my world.

82. I shall tell you about its further characteristics to facilitate its identification.

83. The leaves of the Aśvattha (Pipal) tree always flutter there during all the twentyfour Dvādaśī days in the year.

84. I shall now tell you about another *tīrtha* in Kubjāmraka, known as Śakratīrtha which helps us to cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

85. In that Śakratīrtha, O Earth, Śakra (i.e., Indra) always resides with Vajrāyudha in his hand.

86. He who dies in this highly holy Śakratīrtha after fasting for ten days, reaches my world.

87. I shall tell you its characteristics for the sake of identification. Please listen attentively.

88. Five trees stand on its southern side and that is its identification mark.

89. I shall now tell you about another *tīrtha* in Kubjāmraka where Varuṇa performed penance for twelve thousand years.[1]

90. What merit accrues to a person bathing there, I shall tell you.

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1. This tīrtha was probably named Varuṇatīrtha.

91. Also for the person who dies there. The former goes to the world of Varuṇa and remaining there for eight thousand years acquires the power to go anywhere he likes.

92. He who dies there after giving up all attachment and fasting for twenty years, reaches my world.

93. Listen to what I say about its characteristics.

94. There is a uniform waterfall in it which neither increases in the rainy season nor decreases in the summer season.

95. (I shall now tell you about) the *tīrtha* called Saptasamudraka in Kubjāmra. He who offers ablutions there gains the merit of three Aśvamedha sacrifices.

96. He soon reaches heaven and after living there for fifteen years, is born again as a noble Brahmin.

97. He becomes an expert in Vedas and Vedāṅgas and performs Soma sacrifice.

98. He who gives up life there, after acquiring full detachment and control of senses and fasting for seven days, reaches my world.

99. O fair damsel, listen to my account of its characteristics namely what strange thing occurs in it on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Vaiśākha.

100. Mixed with the placid water of Ganges, in this tīrtha the water turns milky in colour.

101. Soon the colour changes into yellow and then red. Then it becomes emerald-coloured and finally gets the colour of pearl. This *tīrtha* is to be identified by this.

102. Now I shall tell you about another tīrtha in Kubjāmraka named Mānasaras which is dear to all devotees.

103. He who bathes there goes to Mānasasaras and sees there Devas and Rudra, Indra and Maruts.

104. If one dies there after fasting for thirty days and with full detachment, he reaches my world.

105. I shall tell you about its identification mark.

106. It extends over fifty krośas and can be known only by those Bhāgavatas who do their duties scrupulously and not by ordinary people.

107. I told about this to Raibhya particularly because he was an aspirant of mokṣa.

108. I shall tell you another thing, O Earth, about a wonder that once occurred in Kubjāmraka.

Please listen.

109. Near the place where the offerings made to me (in my temple there) were thrown out, a female serpent was moving about without any fear.

110. She was eating the sandalpaste, garlands and the cakes and fruits offered.

111. After some time an ichneumon came there and he chanced to see this serpent. Then occurred a furious battle between the two.

112. At noon on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha, the ichneumon was fatally bitten by the serpent in my temple.

113. The ichneumon too bit the serpent injecting his venom and thus both died.

114. The serpent was born as a noble princess in Prāgjyotiṣa (Assam) and the ichneumon was born as a prince in Kosala (Bihar), handsome, virtuous and learned.

115. They grew up in all happiness and steadily like the moon in the bright half of the month.

116. But whenever the princess saw an ichneumon, she wished to kill it and whenever the prince saw a serpent he too wished to kill it.

117. When they came of age, due to my blessing, the king of Kosala celebrated the marriage of his son with the daughter of the Prāgjyotiṣa king.

118. This alliance gave great jubilation to the kings of Kosala and Prāgjyotiṣa.

119. They were attached to each other firmly like the lac and the stick or smoke and fire.

120. Like Śacī and Indra playing in the Nandana garden, they were deep in love.

121. But although they were so deep in love, they never transgressed limits, like the ocean not transgressing the shore.

122. Seventyseven years they spent like this, without, however, knowing that fact, as they were under my *māyā*.

123. One day, while they were sporting in the garden, the prince saw a female serpent and he wanted to kill it immediately.

124. Although he was prevented from doing so by his beloved, he did not desist from it. Indeed Garuḍa kills a snake at its very sight !

125. So he too, although prevented, did kill that serpent mercilessly.

126. The princess was very much offended by this and became very cross with him and did not speak a word.

127. Just then the princess saw an ichneumon coming out of a burrow before her in search of food.

128. Seeing the ichneumon who came out to eat the snake (which was killed), the princess became angry and started to kill it.

129. Although prevented from doing so by the prince, she killed it.

130. Seeing the beautiful ichneumon killed, the prince was very sorry and he asked her.

131. "The husband is always to be respected by a woman. Then why did you kill this ichneumon which is auspicious and liked by kings, in spite of my warding you off from that action ?"

132. Hearing these words of her husband, the daughter of the king of Kosala replied to him angrily:

133. "Although I repeatedly prevented you from killing that serpent, you killed it. Therefore, although you attempted to prevent me from killing this ichneumon, I killed it".

134. The prince then told her in hard and threatening words.

135. "The serpent has fierce fangs and dreadful poison. It bites men who die as a consequence. So I killed this venomous creature.

136. We are kings who protect the people. It is our duty to suitably punish whoever swerves from the right path.

137-38. Those who harass innocent people and those who molest women out of lust are to be punished even with death according to the rules of kingship.

139-40. I only discharged my duty as a king. But what crime has the ichneumon committed ? It is an innocent creature considered as beautiful, auspicious and sacred for royalty.

141. Since you killed the ichneumon in spite of my attempt to ward you off, you are no more my wife and I am no more your husband.

142. I do not kill you because the royal rules do not permit the killing of a woman". So saying he returned to his city.

143. Thus anger took away their mutual love.

144. In course of time, the king of Kosala came to know of the incident of killing the snake and the ichneumon and the consequent unpleasantness between the couple.

145. He ordered his chamberlains and ministers to bring there his son and daughter-in-law.

146. In accordance with the king's command they duly brought there the prince and his wife before the king.

147. Seeing the son and daughter-in-law, the king said:

148. "O my son, where has gone that intense love between you ? How have you become cross to each other ?

149. The love between you was fast like the lac on the stick. You used to consider each as the image of the other.

150. You were always closely united. It is not proper on your part to reject this good-natured and dutiful wife.

151. She never said anything unpleasant even to the servants. On the contrary, she was always eager to feed them sumptuously. It is not proper for you to discard such a person.

152. *Dharma* is our asset. That indeed is caused by women. It is true that *dharma* rests on women, the son and the family".

153. Hearing these words of the father, the prince fell at his feet and said:

154. "O father, your daughter-in-law has no blemish in her. But she killed an ichneumon even when I prohibited her.

155. Then I got angry seeing that creature killed before me and in that anger I told her.

156. 'Hereafter you are not my wife and I am not your husband'. This is the reason and nothing else".

157. Hearing this, the princess of Prāgjyotiṣa bowed her head and said:

158. "An innocent and frightened serpent was quickly killed by him in spite of my repeated attempts to ward him off from that action.

159. Seeing the serpent killed, I got angry and did not speak any more. Please know this".

160. Hearing his son as well as daughter-in-law, the king of Kosala said to them before the people assembled there.

161. "The serpent was killed by him and the ichneumon was killed by you. What was the cause of anger at this, I wish to know.

162. "O son, when the ichneumon was killed, why did you

get angry ? O princess, when the serpent was killed why did you get angry ?"

163. At this the Kosala prince softly spoke to his father.

164. "Why should this question be put to me ? Ask her, O king. Then you will know".

165. Hearing the words of the son, the king of Kosala uttered words in order to maintain *dharma.*

166. "Tell me, son, what is in your mind that brought about the break in your mutual love.

167. Sons are the closest relations (of the father) in everything. Those who hide the truth when asked by the father, are the lowest and despicable.

168. Right or wrong, the sons who do not answer the father when questioned fall into the hell called Raurava full of hot sands.

169. Pleasing or displeasing, those who answer the father when questioned, go to the world that is for the speakers of truth.

170. You should certainly tell me here the reason for the loss of love between you".

171. Thus said by the king, the Kosala prince said before that assembly of men:

172. "Let all these people go to their homes. Tomorrow morning I shall tell you what is most essentially to be told".

173. When the day dawned, the Kosala king was woken up by the sound of drums and the music of the minstrels.

174. The prince then had his auspicious bath and came to the doorway of the royal chamber.

175. The chamberlain announced the arrival of the prince to the king and conveyed his desire to meet him.

176. The king asked the chamberlain to usher in the prince immediately.

177. Thus ordered by the king, the prince was led into the chamber.

178. The prince prostrated before his father. The king asked him to sit down and expressed his blessings.

179. The people saw the king and the prince seated together and looking auspicious both within and without.

180. The king then asked the son to give him reply to what he had formerly asked namely the cause of estrangement between him and his beloved wife.

181. Then the prince told his father.

182. "I should certainly tell you what you asked me about, although it is not going to be of any help in this.

183. It is really a secret and if you wish to know it, come along with me to the place called Kubjāmra.

184. There I shall tell you, O Kosala king, this secret which you have asked one about".

185. Hearing these words of his son, the king agreed out of his affection for him.

186. When the prince was gone, the king said to his ministers who had assembled there.

187. "O ministers, listen to what I say now after due deliberation. We are now to proceed to Kubjāmra.

188. Make the necessary arrangements. Get ready the elephants and horses". They replied, "We shall do so at once".

189. In the course of a week they made everything ready, elephants, horses, bulls, vehicles, money and cows.

190. Also gold, gems, cloths, food and everything else that was necessary. Then they informed the king that everything was ready.

191. Then, O Earth, the great king called his son and asked him: "How can we start, O son, leaving the country void".

192. Hearing the words of the father, the prince bowed to him, and told him softly.

193. "My younger brother, who is born of the same mother, may be endowed with the kingdom".

194. The Kosala king then observed: "When the elder son is there, how can the younger son be considered for this ?".

195. At these words of the father, the prince of Kosala spoke to him impelled by *dharma*.

196. "I give my full consent for you to give the kingdom (to my younger brother). The acceptance of this will not involve him in any transgression of *dharma*.

197. Having gone to Kubjāmra, I will not return from there. O father, I swear this in the name of truth and *dharma*".

198. Consented thus by the elder son, the younger son was duly installed on the throne.

199. After a long time, the king reached the place called Kubjāmraka with his family and attendants and with all the necessary equipment.

200. Then he performed the prescribed rites in that *tirtha* and gave there abundant gifts of food, cloth, gold, cows, ele phants, horses and land.

201. After many days, the king once asked his son who came near him, about the secret of estrangement between him and his wife.

202. "O son, this is the holy spot sanctified by the feet of Viṣṇu.

203-4. We have given as gifts here a lot of money and gems according to rules. Now tell me the truth why this beautiful daughter-in-law, who is noble and virtuous and who never commits any wrong, has been given up by you without any real cause".

205. The prince then told the father: "Let this night pass. May you sleep. Tomorrow morning I shall tell you everything".

206. Then, when the night was gone and the sun was rising, he took his bath in the Ganges and put on silken dress.

207. He then worshipped me and circumambulated his father and said as follows:

208. "Come, father; let us go. You ask me the secret. Please know it from me".

209. Then the prince, the princess and the king went to the place where the remains of the offerings made to me were heaped.

210. Going close there, the prince held his father's feet in respect and said:

211. 'O king, I was an ichneumon living at the foot of the plantain. Once I chanced to go to this place where the remnants of offerings to the Lord are thrown.

212. I saw there then a female serpent crawling about eating the sandalpaste, flowers and other things there.

213. Seeing that fierce serpent, my eyes turned red with anger and soon I jumped upon her.

214. A terrible fight ensued but none noticed it. It was on the Dvādaśī day of the month of Māgha.

215. In the course of the fight, when I was guarding myself, the serpent bit me on my nose.

216. The poison from me got into the serpent too. Thus both of us were dead.

217. After a lapse of time, when our anger and stupor were gone, I was born as the son of the Kosala king.

218. The serpent was killed in these circumstances, mainly because of my anger. This is the secret I have to communicate to you."

219. After this narration by the prince, the daughter-in-law said: "I was that serpent moving about in the remanants thrown out from the lord's offerings.

220. During the fight I was crushed down by the ichneumon. I was then born as the daughter of the king of prāgjyotiṣa, and then I became your daughter-in-law.

221. Because of that anger inherent in me, I killed that ichneumon. This is the secret I have to tell you".

222. After listening to what his son and daughter-in-law had to say, the king went to Māyātīrtha and died there.

223-24. O lovely Earth, the prince and the princess then went to Puṇḍarīkatīrtha and died there and went to the supreme heaven lorded over by Janārdana.

225-26. The king, the prince and the princess then reached the Śvetadvīpa due to my blessings.

227. All their attendants became highly meritorious and they also got entry into the Śvetadvīpa.

228. Thus have I told you about the splendour of Kubjāmraka, as I narrated to the great Brahmin Raibhya.

229. This is a sacred narrative which deserves to be recited by people of all the four castes and in all ceremonies.

230. This is the best of all lustre and the highest of all penance. This should not be recited in the midst of fools.

231. Nor should it be recited amidst cow-slaughterers or those who condemn the Vedas and Vedāṅgas; so too before those who harbour ill-will to their teachers or speak ill of śāstras.

232. This should be recited in the assembly of Bhāgavatas or of those who are initiated.

233. He who recites it at dawn liberates ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors. He who dies reciting this, attains a four-armed form and resides in my world.

234. Thus, O Earth, have I told you about the place Kubjāmraka. What else do you propose to ask for the good of my devotees ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYSEVEN

The initiation of the Brahmin

Sūta said:

1. After listening to the account of the many acts of *dharma* meant to bring about liberation, Earth told Janārdana the lord of the worlds.

2. "O the power of this place, by hearing the prowess of which I, who was feeling great weight, now feel much lighter and also much purified and free from stupor, O great lord !

3. I am known in the world as having come out of your mouth (and that is quite proper).

4. I now ask you again, O lord, a doubt regarding *dharma*, namely by what dharmic rites initiation is effected.

5. I am very eager to know this great secret in order to know *dharma* in full. So be pleased to tell me".

6. Hearing these words of Earth, the lord in the form of the boar replied in a dense tone resembling thunder.

Varāha said:

7. "O goddess, listen to the truth of my eternal *dharma*, which even the gods concentrating on yoga are unable to know.

8. This auspicious *dharma* which is now being spoken by me, I alone know and in this world my devotees.

9. O auspicious one, listen to the details of initiation (*dīkṣā*) leading to release from *saṁsāra* which you ask me about.

10. Listen to the process of this *dīkṣā* which brings about all good and which is different for the different castes.

11. By this the people are able to escape from further births if they repose their minds in me.

12. Let the person (who wishes to be initiated) go to the preceptor and tell him "O preceptor, I am your disciple. Please instruct me". And after getting his consent collect the materials for *dīkṣā*, like,

13. Honey, ghee, Kuśa grass, sandal paste, flowers, incense, lamp,

14. Antelope's skin, Palāśa stick, spouted vessel, pot, clothes, footwear, white *yajñopavīta*.

15. Support poles, vessel for *arghya*, cooking vessel with ladle, sesamum, paddy and barley, different kinds of fruits, water.

16. Other kinds of food and drink that are acceptable and agreeable to him.

17. He shall also collect the necessary grains, gems and crystals.

18. All these should be then presented to the preceptor at his feet.

19. The Brahmin who wishes for prosperity and desires to be initiated should hold the feet of the preceptor and ask him what he might do for him.

20. Then with the approval of the preceptor, he shall prepare a spacious altar, a square in shape and sixteen cubits in dimension, and place pot in it.

21. Over a mass of grain according to rules. The pot should then he filled with water with mantras and tender sprouts and flowers should be placed in it.

22-23. The rituals, as directed by the preceptor, should be performed there and the materials formerly enumerated should be brought to the centre of the altar.

24. Four pots filled with water and decorated with mango twigs should be placed, one on each side.

25. They should be wound all round with white threads. Vessels containing presents like cloth and the like should be placed near each pot.

26. They should then be gifted away uttering the mantra according to the direction of the preceptor.

27. The person desirous of initiation should then follow the preceptor to a temple of Viṣṇu.

28. After washing the hands and feet, the preceptor shall then sit facing the east and tell the disciples the following:

29. "If a Bhāgavata (devotee of the Lord) does not stand up (in respect) on seeing other Bhāgavatas, it is equivalent to harassing me.

30. After performing *kanyādāna* (giving a daughter in marriage), if one does not observe the subsequent rites, he harasses eight generations of his manes.

31. He who mercilessly torments a dutiful wife, goes to the company of the lowborn oppressers.

32. Disciples who have committed the sin of killing a Brahmin or similar other sins, or kill cows or remain ungrateful, should be avoided.

33. Trees like Bilva, Udumbara and other sacred trees (which are of use in ceremonies) should not be cut down.

34. If the disciple desires ultimate mokṣa, he should be told about what is good to eat and what is bad.

35. Karīra is good. The fruit of Udumbara can be used before it gets petrid.

36. Pork and fish should not be eaten by Brahmins, particularly by those who are to be initiated.

37. Let him not be fault-finding and let him not harm any. Let him not be a tale-bearer or a thief.

38. Seeing a guest coming, he should go out to receive him and converse with him.

39. Lord Viṣṇu has ordained that one should not even think of having illicit contact with the wife of the preceptor, the wife of the king and any Brahmin woman.

40. Lord Viṣṇu has ordained again that one should not set one's mind on gold, jewels or a young girl.

41. Seeing another's affluence and one's own penury, one should not be angry or jealous. This should be an all-time maxim".

42. Thus should the disciple be told. He should then symbolically offer an umbrella and footwear in the form of two pairs of Udumbara leaves in the middle of the altar.

43. So too a razor and a cup full of water. Then I should be invoked with the following mantra:

44. "Om, bow to seven oceans, seven islands, seven mountains and to the thousands of creations and to all. All these live in my heart. What showers down goes up again.

45. Om, lord Vāsudeva, make your presence here as you deem fit. I utter your mantra. Considering your commands to us, kindly come here in this spot of the earth upraised by you. This aspirant of initiation prays for your favour".

46. After uttering this mantra, he should prostrate on the ground by his knees and head.

47. "Om, welcome, I am the welcomer".

48. By the above mantra, O Earth, having invoked the lord, *arghya* and *pādya* should be offered according to direction.

49. The mantra is: "O lord of the worlds, all that is given by the grateful Rudra to the grateful Devas and Asuras and the Brāhmaṇas, may that all be given to you, accept it all, O lord".

50. After offering the *arghya* and *pādya* in this manner, he should take the razor and utter this mantra:

51. "O disciple, may Varuṇa protect you whose head I shave. By this water of Viṣṇu this *dīkṣā* serves to terminate *saṁsāra* '.

52. One pot of water should be given to the workman (barber), who should shave the head without any bleeding (due to scratching or cutting by negligence).

53. The disciple should then take his bath quickly (and then perform other rites) conducive to *mokṣa*.

54. He should then kneel down on the floor and utter the following mantra:

55. "Om, I know all Bhāgavatas, all Dīkṣitas and Gurus (preceptors). Let all of them who have become Dīkṣitas by the favour of Viṣṇu be pleased with me".

56-57. Then saluting all the devotees there and kindling the fire, he should offer in the fire seven times the mixture of ghee, honey, fried paddy and black sesamum, and then rice mixed with sesamum twenty times. Then sitting on the knees, he should utter the following mantra:

58. "The Aśvins, the quarters, sun, moon, and my own self, may they all please listen to my declaration of truth.

59. The earth is held by truth, the earth remains by truth, the sun moves by truth and the wind blows by truth".

60. After declaring this truth, the Brahmin should propitiate the preceptor in due form.

61. Circumambulating the lord preceptor thrice, he should hold his feet in respect and utter the following mantra:

62. "I accidentally got initiation by the blessing of my preceptor. May he forgive me for whatever lapse there may be on my part.

63. After this supplication, he should be seated at the middle of the altar facing east.

64. The spouted vessel should then be held as also the white *yajñopavīta* and then he should utter the following mantra:

65. "By the blessing of Viṣṇu I attained my aim, and got

initiation together with the spouted vessel (kamaṇḍalu). By taking it in my hand, I am initiated into duty and action".

66. Then the preceptor and the disciple together shall circumambulate uttering this mantra:

67. "By moving about placing myself lower and lower, I secured the preceptor and attained initiation, by your blessing O preceptor".

68. By this mantra, the head shall be touched by the feet. Then he can wash (if necessary) and put on the prescribed clothes (given by the preceptor saying).

69. "Wear these clothes, O disciple, and then take the spouted vessel for purification in all rituals".

70. The mantra is: "Receive these vessels containing pleasant sandal paste, pure and favourite to Viṣṇu, and helping to obtain mokṣa".

71. After *madhuparka*, the following mantra is to be recited: "Be pleased to accept this *madhuparka* which cleanses the devotees".

72. Then propitiate the preceptor by holding his feet in respect and by bowing to him with hands folded over the head. Then bearing in mind the instruction of the preceptor, this mantra is to be uttered, namely.

73. "May all Bhāgavatas listen. This great preceptor dissolved all worldly desires in me. I am his disciple and servant. I got a Guru, who is like a God".

74. O Earth, I have thus told you about the initiatory rites of the Brahmin. Know about the same relating to the other three castes.

75. The same rites are applicable to them also (with the necessary modifications) The preceptor and the disciple both attain their aim.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYEIGHT

Initiation of other castes. Gaṇāntika, Comb, Collyrium and Mirror

Varāha said:

1. I shall now tell you about (the initiation of) the Kṣatriya.

2. Giving up all weapons which he has practised to wield, let him attain initiation with the mantra mentioned before.

3. He should gather all materials which I had mentioned earlier except one, namely the skin of the black antelope. The staff of Palāśa also is not to be used.

4. Instead, the skin of the black goat is to be given, and the staff of the Aśvattha is to be used.

5. An altar of twelve cubits is to be made and all that I have said earlier should be done.

6-7. Thus arranging all the materials for the initiation of the Kṣatriya, he should touch my feet and utter the following mantra:

8. "Giving up all weapons, giving up all deeds of the Kṣatriya and giving up, in fact, everything, I have resorted to Lord Viṣṇu for crossing the stream of successive lives".

9. Then standing on my side and holding my feet, he should utter the following mantra:

10. "O lord of lords, I shall not touch any weapon, I shall not speak ill of others. I shall follow only such things as are laid down for liberation proclaimed by you in your boar form".

11. Then he should do all those things as directed, with sandal, leaves, incense etc.

12. Then food should be given to the pious devotees according to practice.

13. O goddess, I have thus told you about the initiation of the Kṣatriya who desires to attain my grace.

14. I shall now tell you about (the initiation of) the Vaiśya.

15. Giving up all actions of the Vaiśya and turning everything towards me, the third caste attains the aim.

16. Collecting all the materials I have enumerated before, an altar of ten cubits should be prepared.

17. As before it should be smeared with cowdung. He should then cover himself with goat skin.

18-19. Then holding a staff of Udumbara in the hand, he should circumambulate the pure devotees thrice, and kneeling down utter the mantra:

20. "I, this Vaiśya, have come to you, giving up all my actions as a Vaiśya. By your blessing, I got initiation. May you be pleased to give me liberation".

21. After saying this and doing things to gain my favour, he may hold the feet of his preceptor and utter the mantra:

22. "Giving up my cultivation, cattle rearing, business and trade, I have been able to get initiation into your worship by your grace.

23. After bowing to the Lord, the devotees should be fed without fault.

24. Such is the initiation of the Vaiśya to worship following my path for release from *saṁsāra.*

25. I shall also tell you about the initiation of the Śūdra by which he gets freed from all sins.

26. All the materials which I had formerly detailed for initiation should be procured.

27. The altar should be of eight cubits and the skin should be that of the blue goat for the Śūdra.

28. The staff should be of bamboo and the cloth should be blue. Then prostrating before me, he should utter the mantra:

29. "I, this Śūdra, have given up all actions of Śūdra and all forbidden food".

30. The Śūdra desirous of initiation should say like this, giving up all desires, free from all sins and with pure consciousness.

31-32. Then he should hold the feet of the preceptor in his hand and utter the following mantra for propitiating him.

33. "For the sake of relief from Saṁsāra I am doing such actions as are ordained for getting the grace of Viṣṇu.

34. After uttering the mantra he should perform circumambulation and prostrate before him again.

35. He should then perform worship with sandal and flowers and, without fail, feed (devotees).

36. Such is the initiation of Śūdra. I have thus told you about this pertaining to all the four castes.

37. I shall also tell you about the colour of umbrellas for different castes.

38. The white umbrella is for the Brahmin, red for Kṣatriya, yellow for Vaiśya and blue for Śūdra.

Sūta said:

39. After hearing about (the initiation regarding) the four castes, Earth bowed to Varāha and asked again.

Earth said:

40. "I have now heard about initiation for different castes. (I wish to know) what should be done by the initiated".

41. Hearing these words of Earth, the resplendent Lord in the form of boar answered.

Varāha said:

42. "Listen to what I tell you in reply to your question. The observance is called Gaṇāntika and it should be always considered as secret".

43. Hearing these words of Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth was pleased and satisfied.

44-45. Then the lotus-eyed goddess who was a devotee herself and was attached to other devotees, spoke to lord Nārāyaṇa with folded hands.

Earth said:

46. "O Mādhava, what are the rules to be observed by those that are fully devoted to you and are initiated?

47. How should you, who are unknowable, be contemplated upon by these people according to their capacity?"

48. Hearing these words of Earth, the Primordial Being replied in sweet words:

Varāha said:

49. I shall tell you in truth what you ask, namely, how I am to be contemplated upon by one dedicated to me.

50. The (use of) Gaṇāntika (rosary) is an ancient practice pertaining to my contemplation and it is of a secret nature.

51. This should be received by those who are pure and initiated and with the prescribed mantras.

52. He who is a Bhāgavata and receives this Gaṇāntika with sight and touch, for him the initiation is successful and he has no duty left.

53. He who receives Gaṇāntika sanctified by mantra, the initiation is called Āsurī.

54. He who receives the Gaṇāntika should meditate on me with pure heart.

55. He who meditates by the Gaṇāntika performs the equivalent of contemplation for a thousand lives.

56. I shall tell you how the mantra is to be imparted to the disciple for the good of the world.

57. The day suitable is Dvādaśī in the months of Kaumuda, Mārgaśīrṣa and Vaiśākha.

58. The follower of my path may receive Gaṇāntika on that day after avoiding non-vegetarian food for three days.

59-60. Kindling fire before me and installing the Gaṇāntika on a bed of Kuśa grass, the preceptor as well as the initiated disciple shall utter *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* and recite this mantra:

61. "O disciple, receive her who was born out of the right side of Lord Nārāyaṇa, and who was held by the first grandfather Brahmā".

62. Then taking the Gaṇāntika with this mantra, the preceptor shall give it to his dear disciple with the following mantra:

63. "O my disciple, receive this goddess who was born out of the right side of the lord Nārāyaṇa, and on contemplating on whom you will get liberated and never take birth again".

Earth said:

64-65. After conducting the bath what should be done? By what mantra should decoration be done so that the action may lead to the state of non-action?"

66. Hearing these words of Earth, the lord of the worlds, Janārdana, replied in words of *dharma*:

Varāha said:

67. "O goddess, I shall tell you in truth what you seek to know, namely the bathing and decoration (of the rosary) which the worshippers perform.

68. In these relating to water (for conducting the bath) and the offerings, the comb, collyrium and mirror are important. Now know what the mantras for this are.

69. After bathing me (as represented in the Gaṇāntika) white silk should be offered as garment. Then collyrium and comb should be offered.

70-71. Then kneeling down with a sense of dedication to me, he should hold the comb (and the collyrium) in his hand and utter the following mantra:

72. "O great lord, be pleased to accept this comb in my hand and arrange your hair with it.

73. O the most supreme being, this collyrium is for your eyes by which you are able to see all the three worlds".

74. Then bathing should be done for the deity with the following mantra:

75. "O lord of lords, with folded hands I pray that you may be pleased to accept for your bath the water contained in this golden pitcher".

76. Then *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* should be uttered and the following mantra should be recited:

77. "This worship by mantra I have attained by your grace O Mādhava. I have been given the Gaṇāntika too. May there not be anything unrighteous for me any more".

78. He who follows this after getting it from the preceptor, goes to my world.

79. This Gaṇāntika should not be given to a bad disciple or to an envious or wicked person. It can be entrusted only in the hands of the good disciple.

80. The best should have one hundred and eight (beads), the medium fiftyfour and the inferior half of that (twentyseven).

81. The best should be of *rudrākṣa*, the medium of *putrajīvaka* and the inferior of *padmākṣa* (seeds).

82. The truth and efficacy of this rosary is not easy to know even by hundreds of lives.

83. It should not be touched by an impure person and it should not be in hands of women.

84. It should be hung up high and should not be touched by the left hand. It should not be shown to others, but worshipped with contemplation.

85. I have, thus, told you this secret leading to liberation. This should be scrupulously guarded. Being purified, my devotee reaches my world".

86. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the ascetic Earth, again asked the great lord:

87. "How should the mirror be offered to you by which you could see your own form in it ?".

88. Hearing these words of Earth, Varāha said, "O goddess, listen to the rule relating to the offering of the mirror.

89. After saying *Namo Nārāyaṇāya*, the following mantra should be recited.

90. "Your ears are the Vedas and Agni, mouth the Brahmin,

nostrils Aśvins, eyes the Sun and the Moon, the face is like the moon, body the entire universe. See this form in this mirror".

91. He who performs my worship in this manner, liberates seven generations in his family.

92. These are the mantras, these are the modes of service. All this should be done with pleasure and satisfaction by those desirous of beatitude.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYNINE

Further Rituals in Worship[1]

1. After bowing to the lord, Earth said again.

Earth said:

2. "I wish to know this, namely the mode of worship of the *sandhyā* in your system".

3. Hearing these words of Earth, the great lord in the form of boar said:

Varāha said:

4-5. O Earth, I shall tell you this secret which you have asked, by which all devotees are able to get liberation from *saṁsāra*.

6. The worship of *sandhyā* is laid down in this way.

7. Holding water in the joined palms with great reverence, and meditating for a while, the following mantra is to be uttered:

8. "The source of the worlds, the primordial indistinct form, all the gods, Brahmā, Rudra, all in *dhyānayoga* bow to Vāsudeva in Sandhyā; we too every day in the sevenday week for release from *Saṁsāra*; O Vāsudeva, I bow to you".

9. He who recites this mantra of mantras and penance of penances, reaches my world.

10. He who recites this secret of secrets, never gets stained by sins.

1. In the text the title is given as *Caturvarṇadikṣā*.

11. This should not be imparted to any one other than an initiated person.

12. O goddess, I shall tell you another matter, namely the offering of lamp by devotees.

13. After performing the due rites, the lighted lamp should be taken and holding it between the shanks, the following mantra should be recited:

14. "Om, bow to the blessing light Viṣṇu, all the gods remain in this flame which shines because of your effulgence. By your lustre and by the lustre of mantra this lamp shines. May you receive it offered with mantra for the sake of removing my *saṁsāra*, as otherwise this action of mine will be fruitless".

15. He who does this liberates all his manes.

[*Varāha said*:[1]

1-2. The person ritualistically worshipping me should, after the decoration, adorn me with *yajñopavīta* of nine threads. Then the *tilaka* of sandalpaste should be put on my forehead.

3. I shall tell you of another act to be done for the good of the world, namely the uttering of the mantra for this, namely.

4. "This decoration of your face, O Vāsudeva, is done by me. This makes it more attractive. O god, snap my *saṁsāra*".

5. O Earth, by this mantra should the *tilaka* be applied in beautiful design on my face. Then taking flowers, this mantra should be uttered, namely.

6. "These flowers are for your magnanimity, O lord; make everything happy; these are created by you for that purpose, *Svāhā*".

7. After flowers, offer incense. Holding the fragrant and beautiful smoke-emitting receptacle,

8. Utter *Om Nārāyaṇāya* and then recite the mantra:

9-10. "O Keśava, your body is sweet-smelling by nature. By this smoke it is made further sweet. By the fragrance of your body make everything smell sweet. Accept this incense for my release from *saṁsāra*".

11. I shall now tell you about the offering of lamp which I accept for the welfare of my devotees.

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1. This portion within brackets is given in parenthesis in the text, probably indicating that this is perhaps an interpolated part.

12. In doing the duties by me, the devotee should take a lamp with flame, hold it between the legs and utter the mantra:

13. "O lord, I bow to you Viṣṇu. All gods reside in fire. Fire shines because of your effulgence and fire is the self itself.

14. O lord, receive this bright lamp for my release from *saṁsāra*. Let not this action of mine be in vain".

15. He who offers me the lamp like this, liberates all his manes".

16. Hearing these words of lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth was wonderstruck and she asked again:

17. "I have now known about the devotees who are dedicated to your service. My mind is eager to know another matter, namely,

18. Of what material should be the vessels used in your service as to be pleasing to you".

19. At these words of Earth, the lord of the worlds said:

20. "O Earth, I shall tell you what you have sought to know, namely what vessels please me.

21. Leaving out vessels of gold, silver and bronze, what pleases me most is vessels made of copper.

22. Thus told by Nārāyaṇa, Earth devoted to *dharma* asked him again: "It appears strange to me that copper pleases you most. Why is it so to you?"

23. Then that primordial and invincible Being, the greatest in the world, replied to Earth:

24. "O sinless Earth, listen intently to what I say about my partiality for copper,

25. Which arose seven thousand aeons ago and which is pleasing to look at.

26. O lotus-eyed one, there was a great asura named Guḍākeśa. He had a cupreous form and was absorbed in my worship.

27. I was worshipped by him for fourteen thousand years, being desirous of acquiring *dharma*.

28. I was pleased by his determination and penance, and seeing his hermitage where (later on) arose copper (I appeared there).

29. Then kneeling down, he meditated on me and seeing me in my four-armed form, he prostrated with folded hands.

30. I was immensely pleased and I spoke to him.

31. "O glorious Guḍākeśa, tell me what I may do for you. I am very much pleased with your devotion, although it is difficult to please me.

32. Ask me the boon which you desire through your thoughts, words or deeds.

33. Then with supplicant hand and pure mind, Guḍākeśa said:

34. "If you are indeed pleased with me, O lord, may I have constant devotion for you for a thousand lives.

35. (Finally) may I have death by the hurling of your disc on me.

36. Killed by the disc, may my marrow and flesh become the holy material called copper.

37. Making vessels out of it and using them in your ritualistic worship, may that be for your pleasure.

38. If you are pleased, O lord, may I have this boon".

39. I then said, "In view of your severe penance I grant you the boon you seek. May it be so as long as the world lasts. You become mine in cupreous form".

40. From then onwards Guḍākeśa was transformed into the nature of copper.

41. Therefore, O virtuous one, know that whatever is offered to me in copper vessel, gives me immense pleasure.

42. The auspicious and holy copper is dear to me. You will see it when the sun is at the zenith.[1]

43. On the Dvādaśī day of the bright half in the month of Vaiśākha, my disc will fall on you.

44. You will then reach my world." Telling thus to Guḍākeśa, I disappeared.

45. Awaiting death by the fall of the disc, he was continuing his admirable penance, thinking all the while as to when he would go to the world of Viṣṇu.

46. In due course, Dvādaśī of the bright half of the Vaiśākha month arrived, and

47. Performing the worship of Viṣṇu in due form, he implored:

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1. The proper place of verses 41-42, which are obviously spoken to Earth is after verse 49.

48. "Let loose on me your disc glowing like fire and take away my soul quickly cutting to pieces my body".

49. Then cut by my disc, the great devotee reached me. But his flesh became copper, blood became gold and the bones became silver and other metals like zinc, tin and iron.

50. Now listen to the result of offerings made in copper vessels.

51. My real devotees should know that it is in this way that copper arose and that it pleases me.

52. The Dīkṣitas among the devotees should offer *pādya*, *arghya* etc., in this. Such is the origin of copper, such its prescription.

53. I have thus told you this. What else do you wish to ask?

Earth said:

Tell me how the Dīkṣita performs worship of Sandhyā and by what mantra.

Varāha said:

54. O Earth, listen to the mantra of Sandhyā of morning and evening.

55-57. Holding water in the palms held together and meditating on me with full devotion, the following mantra should be recited, by which one delights in my world for as many thousands of years as he uses copper vessels.

58. "All gods, Brahmā, Rudra and Indra, all in *dhyāna yoga* contemplate on Lord Vāsudeva, the source of the world, the primordial effulgence.

59. O Vāsudeva, the primordial being, bearing you in our souls, we bow to you again and again, during Sandhyā, for emancipation".

60. May the Dīkṣita worship Sandhyā with this mantra.]

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY

Expiation for eating the king's Food

Sūta said:

1. Hearing the account about *Dikṣā* from the mouth of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the goddess Earth became clear in mind and asked Him again.

Earth said:

2. "How great is the *dikṣā* for your worship, by hearing which my mind has become very clear.

3. O the greatness of the Lord, who has established this *dikṣā* for the four castes for their welfare !

4. But one thing lingers in my mind, O lord, and that you should be pleased to clear for the sake of devotees.

5. Formerly, you enumerated thirtytwo offences in worship. Committing such offences, how do people make expiation for them ?

6. Be pleased to tell me, O Mādhava, how this is".

7. Hearing these words of Earth, the great lord meditated for a while and then replied.

Varāha said:

8.9. "If the pure devotees dedicated to my service eat the food offered by the king, out of desire, fear or contingency, they will be tormented in hell for ten thousand years".

10. At this Earth shuddered and became struck with fear for seventeen days.

11. Then with an afflicted mind she spoke again for the good of the world:

Earth said:

12. "O lord, please hear what I have in mind. I wish to know why there is this prohibition for the king's food".

13. Hearing these words of Earth, lord Nārāyaṇa, the foremost among the knowers of *dharma*, spoke to her:

Varāha said:

14. "Listen, O fair one, to know the truth about the prohibition of the king's food for the pure devotees.

15. Although the king conducts himself with equanimity, he performs cruel actions also by the influence of Rājasa and Tāmasa qualities.

16. So the food he gives is despicable and I don't like it in the interest of upholding righteousness.

17. Listen, O Earth, to what I say further regarding the acceptability of the king's food.

18-19. After installing me with due rites and giving money

and grain to the devotees, if the food is got cooked by my own devotees, and taken after offering to me, it will not be sinful."

20. Hearing these words of Viṣṇu, the saintly Earth asked Varāha again:

Earth said:

21. O Janārdana, how can one purify oneself after taking in king's food.

Varāha said:

22. Listen, O goddess, to what you want to know, namely how people can purify themselves after eating king's food.

23. That sin can be removed by performing Cāndrāyaṇa, Taptakṛcchra and Sāntapana.

24. Then the sin will not remain, so I say. Therefore, the king's food should not be eaten by my devotees who are desirous of salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYONE

Expiation for not cleaning the Teeth

Varāha said:

1. "He who approaches me without chewing the tooth-stick[1], forfeits all merit in store by this single deed".

2. Thus told, Earth asked Him for the sake of the good of devotees.

Earth said:

3. How is it that, by a single offence, all the merit in store is annihilated ?

Varāha said:

4. Listen to the truth that I say that by a single offence, all the acquired merit becomes lost.

5. Man is impure because of the *kapha* (phlegm) and *pitta*

1. The twig like the Margosa's for cleaning the teeth.

(bile) in him and also of marrow and blood. His face is foul-smelling.

6. This impurity disappears by chewing the tooth-stick. Such purity is not got by other ācāras.

Earth said:

7. What is the atonement for one who performs the rites without chewing the tooth-stick (i.e., without cleaning the teeth).

Varāha said:

8. I shall tell you how purity can be obtained by such people.

9. *Ākāśaśayana* (sleeping in the open) for even days, purifies the people who do the rites without chewing the tooth-stick.

10. I have thus told you about the chewing of the tooth-stick and the means of purification for not using it.

11. If one does the expiation, how will he continue to have the sin ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYTWO

Expiation for touching Dead Body

Varāha said:

1. "O blessed one, he who touches a dead body without bathing after a sexual intercourse, remains drinking semen for fourteen thousand years".

2. Hearing this from Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth was very sorry and she asked him:

Earth said:

3. What do you say, O lord ! This is a sad and disgustful thing. How can a man be drinking semen ?

4. This saddens me a lot.

Varāha said:

"O goddess, know this secret.

5. This is indicative of transgression, such as of man having sexual perversion in women.

6. The man who does so reaps the result of his offence.

7. There is no atonement for a deliberate offence. But I shall tell you about the atonement for the offences committed through faults of the mind.

8. Householders who are my devotees, should live on barley meal for three days, oil cake for three days and air alone for one day.

9. They then become free from sins. Those who do this in the prescribed manner are not stained by sin.

10. Thus have I told you about the atonement for one who comes to me after a sexual intercourse.

11-12. If one goes to the cremation ground disregarding the rules I have laid down, he as well as his father and grandfather become jackals and eat the dead bodies".

13. Hearing these words of Lord Hari, Earth asked again for the good of the world.

Earth said:

14. How can there be sin for those who have surrendered themselves to you ? How can it be removed even if there is any ?

Varāha said:

15. O fair one, know from me what you seek to know. I shall tell you this which removes sins.

16. Remaining on food once a day for seven days, then completely fasting for three days, and then taking *pañcagavya* removes sins.

17. I have now told you about the rules for touching the dead body. It is better that the Bhāgavatas avoid this altogether.

18. He who performs expiation in the manner suggested above, gets himself freed from all sins.

19-20. He who touches me after touching a woman in her monthly course out of lust, remains (in hell) drinking menstrual blood for one thousand years.

21. He is then born as a blind, penniless and stupid person and never realises that he is in hell.

Earth said:

22-23. Please tell me how people devoted to you can attain mokṣa even if they happen to commit some offence, and how they can get purification for the purpose.

Varāha said:

24. The person devoted to me, if he happens to touch a woman in her monthly course, shall perform penance for three days by sleeping in the open.

25. My devotee gets purified, in this manner and all sins of offence disappear from him.

26. I have thus told you about the purification after touching a woman in her courses.

27. He who enters my temple after touching a dead body, enters the womb (again and again) for thousands of years.

28. Then for ten thousand years he remains a Cāṇḍāla, then as a blind man for seven thousand years and as a frog for hundred years.

29. As a bee for three years, as a beetle for eleven years, as a snake for seven years and as a chameleon for another seven.

30. As an elephant for hundred years, as a camel for thirty-two years, a cat for nine years and a monkey for fifteen years.

31. Thus by causing offence by oneself, much sorrow is brought upon.

32. Hearing these words of Lord Hari, Earth asked with sorrow:

Earth said:

33. Why do you say, O Lord, such words which are horrifying to all men ?

34. Tell me the expiation for the devotee who fails in his conduct so as to enable him to cross the barriers.

35. Hearing these words of Earth, Janārdana, the lord of the worlds, replied to her for the sake of righteous order in the world.

Varāha said:

36. My devotee who touches a dead body, shall remain taking food only once a day for fifteen days.

37. After doing like this, *pañcagavya* should be taken in.

38. Thus have I told you about the expiation to be done after touching a dead body.

39. He who performs expiation in this manner, gets cleansed of all sins and reaches my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYTHREE

Expiation for passing flatus and answering calls of Nature in the Midst of worship

Varāha said:

1. He who passes flatus during my worship, gets afflicted by wind in the mind.

2. He takes birth as a bee for five years, a mouse for three years, a dog for three years and a tortoise for nine years.

3. Such is the punishment for one who does not know the *śāstra* properly.

4. Hearing these words of the lord, Earth said:

Earth said:

5. By lapses of this kind in your worship, one attains enormous sin. Please tell me the expiation in such cases.

Varāha said:

6. Listen to what I say regarding the action to be done for purification. The guilty shall spend three days and nights by fire.

7. If done like this, then no offence remains and my world is attained.

8. Thus has been told to you to remedy for offences, the faults as well as the expiations which you have sought to know.

9. O Earth, now know what happens to a man who passes motion in the midst of my worship.

10. He remains in the hell Raurava for a thousand divine years eating faeces.

11-12. I shall tell you also expiation for this. He shall lay himself in water and then in air for one day each. Then he becomes absolved of the sin.

13. Thus have I told you about the offence of passing motion during worship.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYFOUR

Other offences during Worship

Varāha said:

1. He who neglects his duties by me, but goes about speaking of expiations,

2. Becomes a fool, O fair one, and becomes free from sin only by doing expiation himself.

3. The expiation for him is sleeping in the open for fifteen days.

4. He who approaches me wearing blue cloth, becomes a worm for hundred years.

5. I shall tell you about the nature of atonement in this case.

6. He has to perform Cāndrāyaṇa according to rules in order to get free from the sin.

7. He who touches me except in the prescribed manner becomes a fool.

8. The sandal, garland, food and prostration offered by him, I shall never receive.

9. Hearing these words of lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth asked him again out of interest in righteousness.

Earth said:

10-11. O lord, now that you speak to me about lapses in conduct, please tell me about the way *upasparśaṇa* (washing with water) is to be done.

12. I am very anxious to know this. Please enlighten me for the welfare of devotees.

Varāha said:

13. O goddess, listen to what I say in reply to what you ask. This is extremely secret.

14. Listen to the action of washing for the person who comes to me after giving up all actions in general.

15. Facing the east, the feet should be washed with water. Then three pods of mud should be applied.

16. Then the hands should be washed with seven pails of water and the feet with five pails each.

17. Then washing (all parts) with two parts should be done.

18. Afterwards water should be sipped three times and the face should be washed with the hands.

19. Then *prāṇāyāma* should be performed according to prescription for the sake of release from *saṁsāra*.

20. He who is desirous of *mokṣa* should then touch the head, ear and nose thrice.

21. After touching in this manner, water should be thrown round thrice.

22. In this manner should *upasparśana* be done and that will please me.

23. For one who does like this, no sin of offence remains.

24. Hearing these words of Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth asked in sweet words what is good for all the Bhāgavatas.

Earth said:

25. Please tell me about the torments as well as the purification of those who perform the rites without *upasparśaṇa*.

Varāha said:

26. O Earth, know in truth the secret about the way those who are guilty in my worship go.

27. He who approaches me after committing adultery, remains a worm for ten thousand and ten hundred years.

28. I shall tell you about the atonement to be done by which he gets purified.

29-30. By performing the *Mahāsāntapana* and *Taptakṛcchra* ceremonies, the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas get released from all their guilt and attain bliss.

31. I don't like the devotee who gets possessed of anger and is fickle in mind touching me.

32. I don't like the angry and possionate man. I like only those who are calm, good and pure.

33. With the senses completely under control, those who do not think of loss or gain, are free from ego and are engaged in my worship.

34. O fair one, I shall tell you another thing. Listen.

35. Even a devotee who though pure and good, approaches me with an angry mind is born a cricket and remains like that for hundred years and an eagle for hundred years.

36. A frog for three hundred years, a demon for ten years and a eunuch for six years drinking semen.

37. He is then born as a blind man for seven years, a kite for thirtytwo years, a cakravāka bird for ten years.

38. Then a moss-eater and a bird in the sky. This happens even if the offender is a Brahmin whirling in the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

Earth said:

39. O, what a rare thing have you told me ! My mind is much perturbed and I don't feel it steady.

40. I am very much afraid after hearing what you have said about what befalls the devotees (due to their lapses).

41. I am not commanding you, O lord of the worlds.

42. But I ask you for the welfare of the world, how the pure and wise devotees can be liberated.

43. Tell me the expiations for those of limited intellect and for those who are not free from desire and stupefaction.

44. (The lotus-eyed Varāha then stood in front, and my devotee Sanatkumāra said.)[1]

45. Hearing the words of Earth, the great yogi Sanatkumāra replied to her.

46. What you have asked is good and sound. The Lord in the form of the boar is the abode of all illusion.

47. O goddess, the person to whom you spoke is Lord Nārāyaṇa, the best among the knowers of *yoga* and *dharma*.

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1. This is an unnecessary verse in view of the next one, and is perhaps an interpolation.

48. Hearing the words of Kumāra, Earth said: "Tell me O great Brahmin, what I ask,

49. The actions, yoga and the matters relating to soul".

50. The great Viṣṇu, the abode of all illusion, told me then as to how the angry Bhāgavata can be purified.

51. Performing the vows, he shall eat the food collected by begging in the houses, at the sixth part of the day.

52. It should be collected only from the good Bhāgavatas and from eight houses alone.

53. He who does like this gets purified of sins. So said Lord Janārdana.

54. Even the highest Brahmin, if he desires the world of Viṣṇu shall soon resort to the worship of Viṣṇu.

55. Hearing the words of Earth, the son of Brahmā told her who was keen on *dharma*.

56. O goddess, what you have said is of a secret nature. Please tell me the *dharmas* which he expounded.

Earth said:

57. Then that lotus-eyed Lord in the form of the boar holding the conch, disc and mace, spoke in words resembling thunder, for the sake of devotees.

58. By doing these actions and observing proper conduct, O goddess, one can attain my world.

59. My worship should not be done with an angry mind or with greed or in haste, if salvation is the aim.

60. Those who worship me with full control of senses and without any trace of anger, become free from all offences and are never born again.

Varāha said:

61. O Earth, I shall tell you what happens to the man who offers forbidden flowers for me.

62. I don't accept those flowers and I don't like the persons who offer them to me.

63. Fools alone dare to offer me like this and they into the hell called Raurava,

64. And then, because of their ignorance, undergo a lot of suffering. They remain as monkeys for ten years, cats for thirteen years.

65. 'Mūka'[1] for five years, bulls for twelve years, goats for eight years, fowls for a month,

66. And buffaloes for three years. There need be no doubt about this.

67. Thus have I told you about what befalls people who offer me forbidden flowers.

Earth said:

68. O Lord, if you are pleased, tell me how your devotees doing service to you are purified by their pure mind.

Varāha said:

69. O goddess, I shall tell you what you want to know namely expiation for attaining purification.

70. For one month he should take food only once a day. For fourteen days he should adopt Vīrāsana posture. For one month after that, he should take food cooked in milk mixed with ghee during the fourth part of the day.

71. He should take barley for three days and remain on air alone for another three days.

72. He who performs like this gets freed from all sins and reaches my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYFIVE

Expiation for eating goose etc.

Varāha said:

1. O fair one, listen to the expiation that is to be done for approaching me wearing red garment.

2. The red garment is equivalent to menstrual flow.

3. The man who wears red garment becomes this for fifteen years.

4. I shall tell you about the expiation by which he gets purified.

5. He should take food daily once alone for seventeen days, live on air alone for three days and on water alone for one day.

1. Perhaps the word is Mūṣaka meaning 'mouse'.

6. By doing this he gets freed of the sin of this offence and then becomes dear to me.

7. I have thus told you, O Earth adorned with red garment, the expiation in this matter.

8. He who touches me in darkness without a lamp, being hasty and stupefied, courts his own downfall.

9. Such a base man brings upon himself great misery.

10. "One whole life he spends as a blind man eating everything he comes across.

11. I shall tell you the expiation for this by which he becomes enabled to reach my world.

12. He should blindfold his eyes for fifteen days, eat once, alone a day for twenty days.

13. On the Dvādaśī day in any one month, he should eat only once and then take water alone.

14. Then he should eat barley cooked in cow's urine. By this expiation, he gets free from the sin.

15. Now listen to what downfall one brings for oneself by doing me service wearing black garment.

16. For five years he remains a worm in parched grain,

17. For five years an ichneumon and for ten years a tortoise.

18. Then for fourteen years he will be a pigeon and remain near where I am installed.

19. I shall tell you about the expiation for a person for the offence of wearing black garment.

20. He should take gruel for seven days and flour balls for three days, and three such balls alone for three days.

21. He who performs like this gets purified.

22. He never gets into *saṁsāra* again but reaches my world.

23. O Earth, I shall tell you the offence a devotee does if he wears unwashed cloth, although he may be otherwise pure.

24. The person clad in such a cloth returns to *saṁsāra*.

25. Such a person is born as an elephant in one life, then as a camel and afterwards as a wolf.

26. Then he is born as a jackal and then as horse. He becomes an antelope and then an ordinary deer.

27. After seven such successive lives he is born as a man again as my devotee, clever and offenceless and free from ego.

Earth said:

28. O lord, I have now known what befalls a person who wears unwashed cloth.

29. Be pleased to tell me the expiation to get rid of this offence.

Varāha said:

30. O goddess, I shall tell you about the expiation you ask for.

31. He should live on barley for three days, oil cake for three days, leaves for three days and milk for three days,

32. Rice cooked in milk for three days and air for three days.

33. In this way he can get freed from the sin of offence.

34. I shall tell you about the serious sin resulting from offering the food that is touched by dog.

35. He becomes a dog for seven lives, a jackal for seven lives, an owl for seven lives and is then born a man.

36. He then takes birth in a family of devotees, learned in the Vedas and pure-hearted.

37. Now listen to the expiation by which one crosses the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

38-39. He should live on roots for three days, fruits for three days, leaves for three days, milk for three days, curd for three days, rice cooked in milk for three days and air for three days and then take the holy bath.

40. By spending twenty one days like this, he gets freed from the offence and reaches my world.

41. O fair one, I shall tell you about what befalls a person who approaches me after eating pork.

42. He wanders in the forest as a pig for ten years and becomes a hunter for fourteen years.

43. He then becomes a rat for fourteen years and a demon for nineteen years,

44. A porcupine for eight years and a carnivorous tiger for thirty years.

45. Then he enters into *saṁsāra* and is born in a family of devotees.

46. Hearing these words of the Lord in detail, Earth said with folded hands:

47. I have now known this secret by which an eater of pork gets purified. What shall one do in order not to become an animal by offence ?

Varāha said:

48. He should live on cowdung for five days, small grains for seven days and liquids for seven days,

49. Food which is not caustic or saline for seven days and flour for three days.

50. Sesamum for seven days and milk for seven days.

51. With great forbearance and fortitude and free from ego, he should spend fortynine days in this manner.

52. He then becomes cleansed of all sins and doing service to me, goes to my world.

53. He who comes to me after eating goose-flesh, becomes a goose for fifteen years.

54. He becomes a shark for ten years and a pig for five years. Thus does one roll in *saṁsāra* after giving offence.

55. By performing this expiation, he becomes a pure devotee free from all sins and, crossing all actions, reaches my world.

56. I shall tell you the expiation for eating goose-flesh in order to get free from the sin.

57. He should live on barley for three days, air for three years, fruit for three days,

58. Sesamum for three days, and food neither caustic nor saline for three days.

59. For fifteen days in this way expiation is to be done. The offence of eating gooseflesh gets removed and he gets the liberation he desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYSIX

Rules of expiation

Varāha said:

1. A man gets the sin of offence by doing service to me after touching a lamp.

2. Listen to what I say in this matter. He becomes attacked by leprosy all over the body for sixty years.

3. And this will be in the house of an outcaste.

4. After undergoing this punishment, if he happens to die in my temple, he takes birth as my devotee in a sanctified family.

5. I shall tell you the expiation for touching the lamp by which the man gets release from being an outcaste.

6. On the Dvādaśī in the bright fortnight of any month, he shall take food only in the fourth part of the day and sleep in the open.

7. Then by gifting a lamp he gets out of this sin, becomes purified and eligible to do me service.

8. Thus have I told you about the offence of touching the lamp and the way to get release from it.

9. He who touches me without bathing after going to the cremation ground commits an offence and I shall tell you what befalls him.

10. He becomes a jackal for fourteen years, an eagle for seven years wandering in the sky, in both forms eating human flesh.

11. He becomes a goblin for fourteen years. And then for thirty years, he remains eating the remains of the dead".

12. Hearing all this from Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth said:

I have great curiosity to know why this is so.

13. The cremation ground, O lord, is praised by Rudra. How can it be otherwise when there is this holy utterance of Śiva?

14. That great god delights there holding a bright skullbone in his hand.

15. The cremation ground is dear to Rudra particularly in the night. How is it that you decry what is praised by Rudra"?

Varāha said:

16. O goddess, listen to this story which has not been fully understood even by the ascetics.

17. After accomplishing a difficult task in Tripura,[1] and killing young and old alike and beautiful women,

18. He got into the grip of sin as a consequence and was unable to move.

1. The three cities of gold, silver and iron in the sky, air and earth built for the demons by Maya and destroyed by Śiva.

19. He lost his mind, effulgence and yogic power and became discoloured.

20. He stood there in that condition surrounded by his *gaṇas*.

21. When Śiva was thought of by me, I saw him with my divine vision as completely bereft of his magical power.

22-23. Then I went there and saw the three-eyed god bereft of consciousness, knowledge and magical power. Then I asked him in a pleasing tone.

24. O Rudra, how is it that you stand here engulfed by sin. You are the creator as well as the destroyer, the source as well as manifestation.

25. You are union as well as separation, you are the repository of all and you are the sole refuge. You are the fierce god, foremost of all gods, you are Sāman and you are the various quarters.

26. Do you not know yourself surrounded by your attendant *gaṇas*. How is it that you are discoloured and swollen-eyed.

27. Tell me truly what I ask you. Contemplate on the *yoga* and *māyā* of the great Viṣṇu. I have come here for your good.

28. At these words of mine, Śiva, regained consciousness and spoke in sweet words with his eyes burning with sin.

29. Listen to the truth, O god. Who else will come to me like this other than you Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the worlds.

30. O Viṣṇu, godhood is attained by your favour.

31. I got *yoga* and *Sāṅkhya* and I have become free from affliction. By your grace I have become like the ocean full of water.

32. O Mādhava, I know you and you know me. None finds any difference between us. Brahmā too is not known as different from us.

33. All this is well, O great Viṣṇu, the repository of *māyā*.

34. Telling me like this, Śiva meditated for a while and spoke to me again:

35. "By your grace, O Viṣṇu, I destroyed Tripura (The three cities) and all the demons there.

36. But along with them I also crushed down many pregnant women, children and old men in all the ten quarters. By the sin of this action, I am not able to move.

37. I have lost all my mystic and magical powers and all my effulgence. What shall I do in this state of sin ?

38. Tell me, O Viṣṇu, what atonement I may do to purify myself and get rid of the sin".

39. I then told the regretful Rudra to take a string of skull-bones and go to Samala.

40. He then asked me to tell him what this Samala was where he was asked to go.

41. Then I told Śiva what I meant when I told him so.

42. Samala is the cremation ground which smells rotten like the sore.

43. People who have given up all desires voluntarily remain there. Taking skull-bones you too remain there.

44. Live there with great austerity for a thousand divine years and then be eating flesh to remove your sin.

45. Eat the flesh that is dear to you of those that are killed. Live there in this way along with your *gaṇas*.

46. When the thousand years are spent in Samala, go to the hermitage of sage Gautama.

47. While in Gautama's hermitage you will realise yourself and be rid of your sin by the blessing of Gautama.

48. The skull-bowl on your head full of sin will be brought down by that sage out of compassion.

49. Giving the boon to Rudra in this manner, I disappeared. Rudra wandered in the sinful cremation ground.

50. Therefore it is that the cremation ground is not liked by me, being defiled by the sin of Rudra.

51. Thus have I told you about the despicable cremation ground and the person who comes to me without purification after going there.

52. I shall now tell you about the expiation to get purified of this offence.

53. For fifteen days he shall eat only once and that in the fourth part of the day, 'sleep in the open' wearing a single cloth and seated in Kuśa grass, and in the morning should drink.

Pañcagavya.

54. He then becomes freed of all sins and reaches my world.

55. Now listen to the expiation for the offence of going to the lord after eating oil-cake.

56. He becomes an owl for two years and a tortoise for three years and then he is born a man again devoted to me.

57. I shall tell you the expiation for this by which the sin is removed and liberation from *Saṁsāra* is attained.

58. For one day he shall take barley cooked in cow's urine and in the night he shall 'sleep in the open' in Vīrāsana pose.

59. Such a person does not revert to *saṁsāra* but reaches my world.

60. He who approaches me with pork becomes a sinful dunce and brings upon himself much misery.

61. He is tormented in hell for as many thousands of years as there are hairs on my body as the boar.

62. Another effect also I shall tell you of approaching me with pork.

63. As soon as he begins to worship me, he becomes a boar.

64. I shall tell you also about another thing which befalls such a person.

65. He becomes blind and continues to reel in *saṁsāra.*

66. In the end he is born in a family of devotees, humble, cultured and effluent.

67. I shall tell you the expiation for this so as to remove the sin.

68. He shall eat fruit alone for seven days and roots alone for seven days.

69. Seven days on rice cooked in milk, seven days on butter milk and seven days on fire.[1] By this expiation he reaches my world.

70. O beautiful goddess, listen to the evil that accrues if one approaches me after drinking alcohol.

71. He remains poor for ten thousand years and then becomes purified to be my devotee again.

72. For a devotee of mine who is initiated, there is no expiation at all if he takes alcohol out of desire.

73. Listen to another thing which I tell you. One gets freed from the sin by taking in drink coloured like fire.[2]

74. He who performs expiation in this way does not incur sin and does not fall in *saṁsāra.*

75. My worshipper who eats vegetables cooked with safflower becomes a boar and is tormented in hell for fifteen years.

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1. The expression is *pāvakabhojanaḥ*. What it signifies is not clear. Perhaps the word is *yavodakabhojanaḥ* which means feeding in barlay water.

2. How the evil of one drink is removed by another ts not clear.

76. Then he is born as a dog for three years and a jackal for one year.

77. Then he becomes a purified devotee and reaches my world".

78. Hearing these words, Earth asked Lord Hari:

79. O ~~great god,~~ tell me about the expiation for the sin of eating vegetables with safflower".

Varāha said:

80. He who comes to me with vegetables mixed with safflower, gets tormented in hell for ten thousand years. I shall tell you about the expiation for this.

81. For eating vegetables with safflower, the expiation is doubtless the rite called 'Cāndrāyaṇa'. For approaching me with the same, the expiation is to live on milk for twelve days.

82. He who performs such expiation gets free from that sin and reaches my world.

83. He who approaches me wearing the cloth of another without washing becomes a dunce and has to perform expiation.

84. He who touches me and serves me in that condition becomes a deer for ten years.

85. One whole life he remains foolish and irate and then becomes my devotee again.

86. I shall tell you about the expiation for this by which the devotee traverses *saṁsāra.*

87. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Māgha,

88. He shall stand in a pond calm and composed and thinking of me alone.

89. When the night comes to a close and the sun rises he shall take *pañcagavya* and then do service to me.

90. He who performs expiation in this way, gets free from sin and reaches my world.

91. If the devotee does not offer nine kinds of food,[1] his manes do not eat for fifteen years.

92. He who eats nine kinds of food without offering (to me), does not acquire any merit.

1. The expression is *navānnāni*. It may also mean 'fresh food' though the plural seems to relate to number.

93. I shall tell you about the expiation to be performed in order to get free from this sin.

94. He shall fast for three days or at least for one day and 'sleep in the open'. He gets purified on the fourth day.

95.. After doing this, when the sun rises, he may drink *pañca-gavya* which will purify him.

96. He who performs expiation in this manner, renounces everything and reaches my world.

97. He who offers me smoke of incense without offering sandal and flowers, doubtless takes birth as a goblin or demon.

98. Certainly he has to live in iron for twentyone years.

99. I shall tell you about the expiation by which he gets free from this sin.

100. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of any month, alternatively on the Daśamī or Ekādaśī day, he shall fast.

101. When the night ends and the sun rises, he shall drink *pañcagavya* which purifies him.

102. The manes of one who performs expiation like this get liberated.

103. He who approaches me wearing sandal, becomes a cobbler for thirteen years.

104. After that he takes birth as a boar.

105. From being the boar, he takes birth as a despicable dog and after that he becomes a man again, my devotee free from faults.

106. He gets release from *saṁsāra* and reaches my world.

107. He who performs the atonement like this, does not at all become touched by sin.

108. He who wakes me up without beating the drum, becomes deaf in one whole life.

109. I shall tell you the expiation by which the sin of not beating the drum is got rid of.

110. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of any month he shall 'sleep in the open' and then he becomes free from sin.

111. O Earth, he who performs expiation like this does not commit any offence and reaches my world.

112. He who eating a lot suffers indigestion and approaches me with eructations and without taking bath,

113. Becomes a dog for one life, a monkey for one life, a goat for one life, a jackal for one life,

114. A blind man for one life and then is born as a rat and is finally born in a big family as a pure and respected devotee free from faults.

115. I shall tell you about the expiation by which the devotee becomes free from sin.

116. For three days he shall live on fire, for three days on roots, for three days on rice cooked in milk, for three days on flour,

117. Three days on air, and shall 'sleep in the open' for three days.

118. At daybreak he shall clean his teeth and drink *pañca-gavya* for his purification.

119. He who performs expiation like this, does not become touched by sin and reaches my world.

120. What I have told you, O goddess, is for the (true) Brahmins. This is the greatest of all narrations.

121. It is righteousness, fame and sacred practice. It is the best of qualities and the moral of all morals.

122. He who reads this every day after rising up in the morning, liberates his manes ten generations before and ten generations after.

123. This is the healthiest of the healthy and the most auspicious of all that is auspicious. This is the gem of all gems that removes all sins.

124. The devotee who recites this with concentration of mind does not become defiled by sin even if he chances to commit an offence.

125. He who recites this after worshipping Sandhyā early in the morning, reaches my world.

126. This should not be read in the midst of the wicked or amidst incompetent disciples. This shall be imparted only to my devotees.

127. I have thus told you about the rules of expiation about which you asked me. What else do you wish to know?

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THE

VARĀHA PURĀṆA

PART II

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

S. VENKITASUBRAMONIA IYER

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS • DELHI

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation.* Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

The present Volume contains the Varāha Purāṇa Part II (Chapters 137-218) in English Translation. This is the thirty second volume in the Series on *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology*.

The project of the series was planned in 1970 by Lala Sunder Lal Jain of Messrs Motilal Banarsidass, with the aim to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium, viz. English. Hitherto, the English translations of eight Purāṇas, namely Śiva, Liṅga, Bhāgavata, Garuḍa, Nārada, Kūrma, Brahmāṇḍa and Agni have been published by us.

This Purāṇa, like most of the other Purāṇas, is of encyclopaedic character. Like the first part, this part of the Varāha Purāṇa contains topics of diverse nature. Nevertheless there is a sort of unity under diversity. The early chapters which open this part contain stories on the efficacy of holy places in India. They tell us how by resorting to these even a creature of low species can attain godhood. To illustrate, a vixen and a vulture are hit by the arrow of a hunter. They die at holy Saukara and are born as the prince of Kaliṅga and the princess of Kāñcī. A wagtail falls in the Ganges and is born as the son of a rich merchant who renounces the world, goes to Saukara and attains liberation. Holy places include streams, pools, wells, peaks of mountains etc. and are associated with the episodes throwing light on their efficacy.

Most prominent among the holy places are Mathurā, Gokarṇa, Badarī and Dvārakā. Their efficacy is supported by the anecdotes which ancient tradition has handed down to us. We learn that devotees are liberated, ghosts are relieved, gods are absolved of curses. A Śrāddha at these centres can transport manes from hell to heaven.

Since the Purāṇa is Viṣṇuite in character, a number of chapters are essentially devoted to the worship of lord Viṣṇu in the form of idols. Various kinds of idols are enumerated. They are of wood, stone, clay, copper, bronze, silver or gold. The procedure of worship is the same as prevails among Vaiṣṇava devotees even to-day.

Much emphasis is placed on the performance of Śrâddha. The subject is very mysterious. It begins with a narrative on the origin of Śrâddha, proceeds with the description of the ritual, the qualities of the Brahmin to be fed and the articles to be used at the rite. The account presents sufficient material for research in this field.

Quite interesting and informative is the story of Naciketas who visits the abode of Yama and returns home. His description of Yama, Yamaloka and Yama's attendants is very thrilling. Extremely horrid is the sight of sinners undergoing torments resulting from their evil deeds. Most dreadful is the scene where demons and Yama's men fight with each other. It is strange to learn from Yama's instructions to his messengers that they have to assume different shapes, as of a snake, fever etc. to perpetrate death. The topic is very important inasmuch as the Purāṇa devotes twenty chapters to this.

In the miscellany of topics we can include Reflections on Sexual Relations, Efficacy of Chastity, the Awakening and others.

Acknowledgement of Obligations

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work very useful. We are grateful to Dr S. Venkitasubramonia Iyer, professor of Sanskrit (Retired), University of Kerala, for his critical Introduction, lucid translation, useful glossary and notes. We also thank those persons who have offered suggestions for improving the same.

—Editor

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PART II

ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)-Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, (MLBD), Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC.	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka; Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI.	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Orienta Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*—Hastings.
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa* Ed. R. S. Bhattacharya Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust) Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edt. Bombay, also Kashiraj Trust Edt., Varanasi 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī*, Gītā Press Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP.	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	*Monier Williams Sk. English Dictionary* MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP.	*Nāradiya or Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvar Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Puranic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs* R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā*--Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYSEVEN

The Vulture and the Jackal

Sūta said:

1. Hearing this elaborate account of expiations pertaining to the devotees (Earth said):

2. What you have said about the great expiations for the welfare of your devotees, is pleasing to me.

3. It behoves you now to tell me, O lord, the means of acquiring *dharma*.

4. What is the holy vow to be performed in Kubjāmraka and which is the holy spot that brings pleasure to the devotees?

Varāha said:

5. Listen to what you have asked of me, which is of a highly secret nature, namely the most sanctified spot for the devotees.

6. Kokāmukha is a great spot, so too Kubjāmraka, so again Saukara which gives release from *saṁsāra*.

7. Holding which spot I raised you from the underworld and where the river Gaṅgā flows.

Earth said:

8. To which worlds do those who die in Saukara go? What merit is acquired by bathing there or drinking its water?

9. What are the sacred Tīrthas (places for bath) in Saukara. It behoves you to tell me all this for the sake of establishing *dharma*.

Varāha said:

10. Listen to what I say in reply to what you ask, namely where the people dying in Saukara go.

11. What merit accrues to those who go there or die there and the tīrthas therein.

12. Listen to the merit that those who go to Saukara get.

13. Those who die there send to heaven seven generations of their ancestors and fourteen generations of their successors.

14. By merely going there and seeing me, one takes birth for seven lives in a big family,

15. Affluent in wealth and grain, handsome and virtuous and ever devoted to my service.

16. He who goes there without committing any offence and lives there till death,

17. Assumes a form with conch, disc, mace, lotus and bow in four hands and goes to Śvetadvīpa.

18. I shall tell you, O Earth, what happens to the man who bathes in these *Tīrthas.*

19. One acquires enormous religious merit by bathing in the Cakratīrtha where the Cakra (disc) is installed.

20. Going to Cakratīrtha taking only limited food and in all austerity,

21. And taking there ritualistic bath on Dvādaśī day in the month of Vaiśākha, one takes birth in a large and affluent family and remains in it for ten thousand ten hundred years.

22. He becomes a great devotee dedicated to my service, gets initiated and avoids all offences.

23. By this he crosses the ocean of *saṁsāra* and attains a four-armed form holding disc, mace, conch and lotus.

24. He who dies there gets a form similar to mine, and excels in my world.

25. Hearing these words of the Lord, Earth said with hands folded over her head.

26. In the tīrtha Saukara, the moon propitiated you. Tell me about this, as I am eager to know.

27. At these words of Earth, Viṣṇu, the respository of all *māyā*, spoke to her in a voice like thunder.

28. O Earth, listen. I shall tell you the reason why I was worshipped by him.

29. I was pleased with him and I revealed to him my original form which is difficult even for the gods to see.

30. Soma could not stand the effulgence of this form and he fell down senseless.

31. Then closing his eyes and folding the hands over his head, he desired to speak but could not.

32. Seeing this condition of this lord of the Brāhmaṇas, I prompted him in sweet words.

33. O Soma, with what aim do you perform this severe penance ? Tell me what you have in mind. I shall grant that for your pleasure.

34. On hearing my words, the lord of luminaries, who had come to Soma-Tīrtha, spoke thus.

35. O great god, the master of yoga and the lord of yogins, now that you are pleased and have come here,

36. May I have firm and eternal devotion for you as long as these worlds exist.

37. May the form you have given me be visible in all the seven islands of the earth.

38. Let it be *soma* that Brahmins drink in sacrifices and may they attain the divine supreme path.

39. On new moon day when I am weak, let there be oblations for the manes, and may I become pleasant to look at after that.

40. Let my mind never turn to what is unrighteous. Let me be the lord of all herbs.

41. If you are pleased, O great god without beginning, middle or end, may this be granted to me.

42. Hearing these words of Soma (I gave him the boon) and disappeared there.

43. Thus did Soma perform penance and get supreme attainment at Somatīrtha rare to get.

44-46. I shall tell you the result that accrues to a devotee of mine of righteous conduct, who takes bath in Somatīrtha where the great Soma performed penance standing on one foot.

47. Remaining like that with upturned face for five thousand years and doing severe penance, Soma attained great brilliance.

48. He became free from the effect of all his offences.

49. He who performs oblations in the Somatīrtha is born a Brahmin well-versed in Veda and Vedāṅga for three thousand three hundred years.

50. He becomes wealthy, virtuous and well known and a devotee not committing any offence. He finally gets liberated from *saṁsāra*.

51. O fair one, I shall tell you the sign by which Somatīrtha can be identified by a devotee.

52. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Vaiśākha, when darkness sets in and nothing is visible,

53. Moonlight is seen on the earth without, however, the moon being there.

54. Such is the wonder of the place which I have to tell you.

55. This is the indication by which the Somatīrtha in Saukara can be known, where all beings get release.

56. I shall tell you another thing which shows the wonderful greatness of this place.

57-58. By the prowess of this place of mine, a female jackal who happened to die there without any desire, was born as a highly beautiful princess, supremely virtuous and proficient in all the sixty four arts.

59. On its eastern side is the tīrtha called Gṛdhravaṭa, where a vulture which died without any desire, became a human being.

60. Hearing these words of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the holy Earth spoke for the welfare of the devotees of Viṣṇu:

61. What a power does this *tīrtha* possess, by which two beings in the animal kingdom, namely a vulture and a jackal, attained human form!

62. O Janārdana, tell me what befalls a person who bathes or dies there.

63. What identification do they get who die there without any desire?

64. Hearing these words of Earth, Viṣṇu, the foremost knower of everything righteous, spoke to Earth in sweet words.

65. Listen, O Earth, I shall tell you what you seek to know, namely how these two beings attained human form.

66. When due to what I had ordained, Kṛtayuga was over and Tretāyuga had set in,

67. A virtuous king by name Brahmadatta was ruling in the city of Kampilla.

68. He had a handsome and righteous son named Somadatta.

69. Once the prince went for hunting in the forest full of tigers and lions for the sake of his father.

70. While he was wandering, being not able to get any game, he came across on his right a female jackal.

71. The prince hit her with an arrow and she fell down in great pain.

72. Being wounded by the arrow and tormented by the heat of the sun, she went to a Śākhoṭaka tree.

73. Then she gave up her life without any desire in the Somatīrtha.

74. Meanwhile, the prince felt thirsty and reached Gṛdhra-vaṭa for taking rest.

75. He saw a vulture on the branch of a banyan tree and then hit it with an arrow.

76. It fell down dead being pierced in its heart.

77. The prince was delighted. He plucked out its wings to feather his arrows and went home.

78. The vulture died there without any desire, and after a long time, it was born as the son of the king of Kaliṅga.

79. He was handsome, virtuous and learned and always delighted the people.

80-81. The jackal was born as the daughter of the king of Kāñcī. She too was beautiful, virtuous, cuckoo-voiced and proficient in all the sixtyfour arts.

82. O Earth, due to my favour, Kāñcī and Kaliṅga became very friendly and closely attached to each other.

83. In due course, the marriage of the prince of Kaliṅga with the princess of Kāñcī was conducted in the proper manner.

84. The King of Kāñcī bestowed on them numerous gems and jewels and elephants, horses and women.

85. Honoured well by him, the king of Kaliṅga also went to his capital with his son and daughter-in-law.

86. The couple lived in extreme happiness like Candra and Rohiṇī.

87. They delighted themselves in temples, gardens and other places of enjoyment.

88. If the princess did not find her husband by her side even for a moment, she felt extremely anxious.

89. Similarly, the prince too felt the same if he could not find the princess near him even for a moment.

90. Day by day, their love waxed like this and there was no difference between them in any matter whatsoever.

91. The prince, by his intelligence and nobility pleased all his subjects and all the ladies in the harem.

92. By the couple everybody was made happy.

93. Their mutual love steadily grew up and their intimacy was like that between Indra and Śacī.

94. The loving princess once made a request to her husband:

95. O famous prince, I wish to ask you something which you may tell me because of your love.

96. Hearing these words of his wife, the prince of Kaliṅga said in sweet words:

97. O fair princess, I shall tell you in truth whatever you wish to know.

98. Truth is the source of all Brahmins, Viṣṇu is established in truth. The source of that is penance, the kingdom is established by truth.

99. I will never speak falsehood, I have not said anything false so far in my life.

100. I shall give you elephants, horses, chariots, vehicle, gems and wealth. I shall even raise you to the very position of the ruler.

101. Hearing these words of her husband, the princess of Kāñcī held his feet and said.

102. I don't wish to have gems or elephants, horses and chariots. I don't wish to rule the kingdom so long as you are there.

103. I wish to sleep for a short while at noon without being seen by anybody.

104. During the time of this vow, even the father-in-law and mother-in-law and any one like them shall not see me.

105. Those in my own household may, however, at times see me sleeping.

106. Hearing these words of his wife, the prince of Kaliṅga agreed to what she said and spoke to her:

107. Be assured, O my love, that none will see you in your bed during your vow.

108. As time was passing, the king of Kaliṅgs having become old, installed his son on the throne.

109. He gave the kingdom, as is wont in his line, after making it free from all troubles.

110. After receiving this gift from the king, he used to sleep alone without being seen by anyone.

111. In due course, he begot five children resplendent like the sun.

112. Such is the human world under the spell of my *māyā* that everyone revolves like a wheel in accordance with one's own actions.

113. A human being is first born, then he becomes a boy, then a youth in the prime of life, and after that attains old age.

114. Whatever deed a boy does without knowing it, does not bring upon him any sin.

115. While he was ruling the kingdom happily and free from trouble, seventyseven years passed.

116-117. In the seventyeighth year, on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Mādhava, when the sun was at the zenith, the desire came upon him to see his wife.

118. He thought: Who is worshipped by her and what is her vow to sleep in loneliness. A vow during sleep is not heard of anywhere.

119. This is not ordained by Viṣṇu or Śiva, nor do we find it in the dharmaśāstra of Manu.

120. A detestable action can never be *dharma* even for yogins. There will be none who will do like this.

121. We do not find in dharmaśāstra of Bṛhaspati or Yama anything ordaining a vow for a woman in sleep.

122. Enjoying as much as she liked and eating meat, taking tāmbūla and wearing red garments,

123. Having fragrant unguents and numerous gems, what is the sort of vow she performs?

124. Certainly my wife will be angry if I see her. All the same, I should know what vow she practises.

125. Perhaps she wants to acquire the power of attraction of the Kinnaras or to become a yogīśvarī to go wherever she likes.

126. Or she is having sexual urge for another person.

127. While he was thinking like this, the sun set and night began giving pleasure to all.

128. When night was over and day set in, the bards began singing rhapsodies.

129. As the sun rose for the welfare of the world, the king was roused by the sound of conchs and drums.

130. The desire to see his beloved was still there in his mind.

131. He then took bath and wore silken clothes and gave orders to keep away people from him.

132. Any one who touches me during my vow will be punished according to the rules of law.

133. Issuing the order in this manner, the king went to the place of vow of his beloved in order to see her.

134-135. He found her there crying with severe headache and asking herself.

136. What wrong did I do that I am now in this despicable state ?

137. My husband does not know that I am helplessly suffering like this. What will he or my relations think of me ?

138. What shall I tell those who are my constant companions ?

139. How has all this come about ? What will my husband say ? What will others say ?

140. The vow which is not properly done will be defective. But I shall once go to Saukara and there I shall utter what I have in my mind.

141. Hearing these words of his beloved, the king embraced her and said:

142. What do you say ? Why do you condemn yourself. Why should you be sorry when you can be happy ?

143. Are there not doctors adept in the eight kinds of treatment, who can control your headache ?

144. Under the pretext of observing a vow, you have been hiding your severe headache.

145. The head is aching because of the disturbance of wind, phlegm, bile or blood or all these together.

146. It can also be due to exciting bile in place and out of place by eating meat.

147. The head can be bored, blood expelled and anointed. How then can the ache remain ?

148. Why is it that without telling me about this, you undergo all this suffering under the guise of vow ?

149. You now speak of going to Saukara. What is the secret for you there ?

150. Then that beautiful and bashful lady held her husband's feet and told him:

151. Be pleased, O king, not to ask me this question. My former life was full of bad deeds.

152. Hearing these words of his beloved, the king of Kaliṅga spoke to her with composure.

153. O beautiful lady, why should you hide anything from me. Tell me the truth.

154. She then told the king softly with eyes wide with wonder.

155. The husband is virtue, the husband is glory and the husband is the most dear. So what the husband asks should certainly be told.

156. Still I don't wish to say what I have in mind because it may cause sorrow to you.

157. My distress remains in mind. You are a handsome king ever remaining happy.

158. You have numerous wives like me in the harem. You can have any food you like, so too clothes and jewels.

159. You can drive in any vehicle, or on the back of elephant or horse. So even without me you can have a life of pleasure.

160. Your command is unviolable and you have everything for your pleasure. So it is not necessary for you to ask me about my illness.

161. O noble king, you are my god, preceptor, husband, sacrifice, *dharma*, wealth, desire, fame and heaven.

162. So when you ask me anything, I should tell you the truth. That is the duty of all obedient wives.

163. But the happiness of the husband should not be disturbed by a wife. Therefore, please don't ask me about my pain.

164. Hearing these words of his wife, the king of Kaliṅga spoke being distressed at her ailment:

165. Happy or unhappy, the husband should be told what he asks.

166. No virtuous wife will hide from the husband any matter private or public, good or bad.

167. Even if it is a sin committed out of passion, if the wife hides it, she is never considered virtuous.

168. Considering all this, O great lady, tell me the truth. You will not be committing any sin by telling me the truth.

169. Hearing these words of her husband, who was standing on *dharma*, she replied:

170. It is said that the king is god, the king is preceptor and the king is Soma. Therefore, in the name of *dharma* I should tell you what you ask.

171. If I should not keep it secret, install your eldest son on the throne, as is the usual practice.

172. Then come along with me to the place called Saukara.

173. Hearing these words of his wife, the king of Kaliṅga agreed to her proposal and said:

174. As you say, I shall give my kingdom to my son as I got it from my father.

175. The king and the queen in full agreement with each other, left that place.

176. Then seeing the chamberlain, he asked him in a loud voice to dispel the crowd that had gathered there. All those who had collected there out of curiosity were asked to leave the place.

177. Then a tumult was heard inside the palace.

178. Why are we being sent out from here ? We have come here for our own purpose. Why should there be a command like this ? Perhaps we are not to know the reason.

179. Then he ate sumptuous food and took rest with his wife for a while.

180. Then he sent for his ministers and asked them to make arrangements for the coronation of the son.

181. He also asked them to decorate the capital in an auspicious manner.

182. Then he went near the oldest minister, who was well-versed in polity, and told him.

183. O revered minister, I wish to coronate my son tomorrow. Please make arrangements for all the necessary rituals.

184. The arrangements have already been made, they said. What you proposed to do is agreeable to us also.

185. Your son, O king, is interested in the welfare of your subjects and he is always just and considerate.

186. Your proposal really gladdens us. So saying the ministers left and the sun set.

187. He spent the night well and was roused in the morning by music and the rhapsodies of the minstrels.

188. When the night was over and the sun rose up, the son was crowned at an auspicious time.

189. Giving him thus the kingdom and smelling him on his head, he told him.

190. Although you have now become the king, listen to what you should do.

191. If you wish to acquire great merit and liberate your manes, you should be a liberal giver and abstain from injury.

192. But one who molests another's wife should be punished, so also one who kills children.

193. Do not entertain desire for another's wife particularly when she is a Brahmin. Close your eyes if you see a beautiful lady who is another's wife.

194. Don't desire the wealth of another or any ill-earned wealth. You should protect the land with cleverness and justice.

195. Be always enterprising and follow the advice of the ministers. The report of a minister should be carefully considered.

196. Take care to protect your person. See that the subjects as a whole, and Brahmins in particular, are happy.

197. Indulgence in the seven kinds of pleasure may bring about great harm.

198. Wealth should never be squandered. Unpleasantness with ministers should be avoided particularly by those that are interested in the welfare of the subjects.

199. Do not prevent me from going away renouncing everything, but observe all that I have said.

200. Hearing these words of his father, the prince held his feet and said piteously:

201. What are kingdom, treasury and army to me. Without you here, I may not be able to have any activity.

202. You have crowned me king, but I don't consider it great without you.

203. I know only to play as other boys do. I do not know the administration of the kingdom, which only experienced kings know.

204. Hearing these words of his son, the king of Kaliṅga spoke to him words of consolation.

205. I do not know why you say like this. The citizens will instruct you as to what you should do.

206. After advising the son in this way, the king started for Saukara.

207. Seeing him leave like that, the citizens with their families followed him.

208. The elephants, horses, chariots and women in the harem gladly followed him.

209. After a long time, he reached Saukara and there he made large gifts of money and grain.

210. O Earth, as time passed, they became more and more purified.

211. Then the handsome prince spoke pleasantly to the princess of Kāñcī.

212. Now a thousand years of my life is over, please tell the secret about which I asked you before.

213. Hearing these words of her husband, she laughed and told the king:

214. It is all as you say. You fast for three days and then you will know the truth.

215. The king agreed: O my beloved, I shall do what you say. That is to my liking also.

216. Then he took the prescribed twig, twelve fingers in length, and after bathing took the vow of fast for three days.

217. For three days they observed fast according to rules and after bathing, put on new silk.

218. Then they bedecked themselves and offered worship to Viṣṇu.

219. Then she removed all ornaments, offered *naivedya* to me and then told the king.

220. O my lord, come along so as to know the secret. Then holding his hand as in wedlock, she spoke sweetly to the king.

221. I was formerly a vixen and I was hit by the arrow of Somadatta when he was hunting.

222. See here the stump of the arrow well lodged in my head, as a result of which I have developed headache.

223. I was then born in the Kāñcī royal family and I was given to you in marriage. By the prowess of this place I attained all this.

224. Hearing this, the king of Kaliṅga said to her remembering his previous life.

225. I was a vulture who was hit by the same Somadatta by a single arrow.

226. Then I was born as the king of Kaliṅga and attained great prosperity and this kingdom.

227. All this was because I died without any desire in this holy place.

228-229. The devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa and all the other people there, hearing about this, began to perform rites there without any sense of loss or gain.

230. Those who died there without any desire went to Śvetadvīpa with a four-armed body, all of them holding conch and various weapons.

231. The women also went to Śvetadvīpa and enjoyed all pleasures there.

232. I have thus told you about the greatness of Saukara.

233. Those who perform rites here and die without desire go to Śvetadvīpa.

234. Now listen, O Earth, what results from a bath in Śākhoṭaka tīrtha.

235. For twelve thousand and twelve hundred years they enjoy pleasure in the Nandana garden.

236. They then come down to the earth and are born in a big family of my devotees.

237. I shall now tell you the result of merely bathing in Gṛdhravaṭa.

238. For nine thousand nine hundred years he delights himself in the world of Indra with the gods.

239. Then coming down from Indraloka, he is born as a devotee with full detachment.

240. I have thus told you the result of bath in this tīrtha which you desired to know.

241. Hearing these words from Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth asked him again in sweet words:

242. Due to the result of which action is this tīrtha attained for bath or for death? Be pleased to tell me this.

Varāha said:

243. O goddess, listen. Due to the defect of some action, one is born as an animal.

244. But due to merit acquired in former lives by deeds like bath in sacred spots, and by liberal gifts etc, one happens to die there.

245. The action performed in a former life, whether it is big or small, gives its effect without fail.

246. Even by the very sight of a sacred spot at some time or other and even alone, what is weak becomes strong and what is strong becomes weak.

247. The result of action is mysterious because what is little becomes enormous.

248. That is the reason of being born as a human being and attaining kingship.

249. The jackal and the vulture, by their death in the *tīrtha*, got their sin removed and attained memory of their former lives and went to Śvetadvīpa.

250. I shall now tell you about the tīrtha called Vaivasvata where Sun-god performed penance.

251. In order to get a son, Sun performed severe penance and Cāndrāyaṇa for ten thousand years.

252. Then for seven thousand years, he lived on air alone.

253. I was very much pleased by this action of Sun and I asked him to seek a boon, as he was devoted to me.

254. Choose a boon which you have in mind.

255. Hearing these words, the mighty son of Kaśyapa, spoke to me in sweet words:

256. If you are pleased with me, then give me the boon of my getting a child by your favour.

257. I was glad to hear this uttered by him in all purity and seriousness.

258. You will beget a twin, Yama and Yamunā.

259. After giving this boon to Sun I disappeared due to my yogic power. Sun too returned to his abode.

260. One who attains merit by austerities at Saukara, eating but little and bathing there, remains in the world of Sun for ten thousand years.

261. The virtuous man who dies there never goes to the world of Yama, because of the power of this *tīrtha*.

262. Thus have I told you about the benefits of bath and death at Saukara.

263. This is the narrative of all narratives, the action of all actions. This is to be recited as authority during the worship of sandhyā.

264. This is the glorious mantra dear to all devotees.

265. This should not be imparted to a wicked person, a fool or one who is not a devotee, nor to a Vaiśya or Śūdra who does not know me as the Supreme being.

266. This should be recited in an assembly of learned men or

in a hall full of Brahmins proficient in Vedas. It may be imparted to those who are initiated and who know the *śāstras.*

267. O blessed goddess, thus have I told you about the merit that accrues from Saukara.

268. He who recites this rising up early in the morning, gets the result equivalent to contemplating on me for twelve years.

269. He does not take birth again, but attains eternal liberation. He who reads even one chapter of this, liberates ten generations of his ancestors.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYEIGHT

The Story of the Wag-tail

Sūta said:

1. After hearing about the greatness of Saukara and the benefits drawn from it and its capacity to change one being into another.

2. The goddess who knew everything about *dharma* was wonderstruck and felt much gratified.

3. She then asked Lord Viṣṇu: How great is this tīrtha Saukara of yours ! Whichever being dies here without desire becomes a human being.

4. What other story do you propose to tell me about Saukara. I am very much curious to know.

5. What merit accrues to a person who sings there or renders instrumental music ?

6. What merit is acquired by one who dances there or what by one who keeps awake all the time. What is the effect of making gifts of cow, food and water there ?

7. What benefit is got by cleaning, anointing, offering flowers, incense, lamp and *naivedya* ?

8. What is the effect of other actions like *japa* and sacrifice performed there ? Please tell me all this for the sake of your devotees.

9. Hearing these words of Earth, Lord Hari spoke in sweet words.

Varāha said:

10. O fair goddess, I shall tell you what you wish to know, the sacred deeds that bring about happiness.

11. In Saukara a wag-tail bird ate too many worms as a result of which it was suffering from indigestion.

12. By this action, it fell down dead.

13. Then came there many boys to take it for playing and they were running for it.

14. They began to quarrel among themselves each attempting to get it for himself.

15. Then one of them took it and threw it into the river Ganges saying that it was of no use to them.

16. The wag-tail happened to fall in Āditya tīrtha in the Ganges.

17. As a result of this, it was born as the beautiful son of a Vaiśya who had performed numerous sacrifices and was very wealthy.

18. Intelligent, pure and devoted to me he was, and twelve years passed in this manner.

19. Once when his father and mother were together, he bowed to them and made a request.

20. If I am dear to you, please grant me a boon I ask for.

21. I should not be said 'No' either by you father, or you mother. I swear by my preceptor.

22. Hearing these words of the son, the parents were very glad and they told the dear son.

23. Whatever you say and whatever you have in mind, be confident that we will fulfil.

24. Thirty thousand milch cows are here and you can make a gift of any of them.

25. If you do not wish to have trade which is our occupation, you may gift away all wealth to your friends.

26. You can gift away quite unhampered all the grain and money.

27. We shall bring here aristocratic girls of our clan to choose one as your bride.

28. If you wish to perform sacrifices, you can do the same according to the rules laid down for Vaiśyas in this regard.

29. If you wish to be a farmer you have here eight mighty bulls and eight thousand ploughs.

30. If you wish to feed Brahmins sumptuously you can do it as you like.

31. Hearing these words of his parents, the virtuous boy held their feet and said:

32. I don't wish to make gifts of cows. I have not thought of my friends. I don't wish to have a bride and I don't wish to have the merit of sacrifices.

33. I don't wish to enter trade or farming and cattle-rearing. Nor do I wish to host anyone.

34. There is only one thing that I desire and that is to go to Saukara, the place of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

35. Hearing these words of their son, the two devotees of mine began to weep. (The mother said):

36. How is it that you think of Lord Nārāyaṇa now? That is, of course, good to you at the proper age.

37. Even now I have to run after you to make you eat. How is it that you think of going to Saukara now?

38. My breasts are still full of milk for you and I still wish to fondle you. How is it that you think like this?

39. During sleep when you turn on the bed you call 'mother' even now. How is it that you have this desire?

40. The women hold you when you play. No offence has been committed in temples or homes.

41. No relation or servant has spoken to you anything harsh. You have with you the cane when you are threatened or made angry.

42. I do not find any reason for your renunciation.

43. Hearing these words of the mother, that delighter of the Vaiśya clan, spoke to her in sweet words:

44. I have always been attached to your person. During pregnancy I was in your womb. As child I was playing over your shoulders.

45. I have suckled your extensive breasts and, sitting on your lap, I have soiled your whole body.

46. O mother, be kind to me. Give up the grief of parting with the son.

47. People come and go. When once gone, they are never seen again.

48. From where is one born? What relation has he? Whose

is a mother or father? I happened to fall in your womb and thereby into the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

49. Thousands there are of fathers and mothers and hundreds of sons and wives in numerous lives. Who are they and who are we?

50. Therefore, O mother, don't feel sorry. The parents were surprised at this and they said :

51. What a great secret is it that you speak about.

Then the Vaiśya boy told his parents in sweet words:

52. If you think that there is a secret in what I said, then ask me about it at Saukara.

53. There I shall tell you the secret about me if you ask there in Sūryatīrtha.

54. They agreed and resolved to go to Saukara.

55. Arrangements were made for everything regarding the journey to Saukara, the place of the lord of Ābhīras.

56. Twenty thousand cows were sent there in advance.

57. People went in front with all materials, whatever in the house that could be offered to Lord Nārāyaṇa.

58. Then on the Trayodaśī day in the month of Māgha, he called together all his people.

59. They all started together at an auspicious time, cleansed themselves and took bath with lord Nārāyaṇa in mind.

60. Meditating on Nārāyaṇa for a long time, they reached my temple on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Vaiśākha.

61. After bathing there and propitiating the manes and putting on the dress prescribed for my devotees, they moved forward with twenty thousand cows.

62. They were received duly by my devotee named Bhaṅgurasa.

63. He was given twenty milch cows all of them sacred and auspicious.

64. The king was giving gifts of money and gems every day and feeling happy with his wife and son.

65. While he was spending the days like this, the rainy season set in which makes all plants grow.

66. The Kadamba, Kuṭaja and Arjuna trees flowered profusely. Women separated from their husbands were feeling extremely sad.

67. The waterfalls produced roaring sound in some places and gentle sound in others.

68. There were the subdued sound of flowing rivers and the cooing of peacocks. The fragrance of Kuṭaja, Kadamba and Arjuna flowers was spreading everywhere.

69. The blowing wind gave delight to the peacocks but agony to women in separation.

70. As the rainy season with its drums of thunder passed, the autumn season set in and the Agasti star (Canopus) rose.

71. The ponds became clear and smelt of lotuses and lilies which blossomed producing fine fragrance.

72. The wind was pleasant with fragrance and coolness and the smell of the Saptaparṇa flowers excited lovers.

73. When the autumn was over and the month of Kārttika started, on the Ekādaśī day in the bright half of the month.

74. The couple took bath and dressed themselves in silk and then spoke to the son;

75. "We have now stayed here for six months and the auspicious Dvādaśī day has come. Why don't you tell us the secret which you have been hiding from us."

76. Hearing the words of his parents, that dutiful son spoke in sweet words:

77. What you say is true. Tomorrow morning I shall tell you this secret.

78. This Dvādaśī, O my parents, is particularly dear to Viṣṇu and it is very auspicious and it brings about the well-being of the devotees of Viṣṇu.

79. The initiated yogins among the devotees of Viṣṇu are delighted on the Dvādaśī day of Kārttika and they make gifts.

80. By these gifts meant to propitiate Viṣṇu, they are able to cross the dreadful ocean of *saṁsāra*.

81. As he was telling them this, the night came to a close. After worshipping *sandhyā* at dawn,

82. He had the ritualistic bath, and putting on silken garments, bowed to Lord Viṣṇu.

83. And holding the feet of his parents, told them:

84. I shall tell you, my parents, the purpose of our coming here. It is to give you the secret of this Saukara.

85. I belong to the species of birds and I was born as a wag-

tail. I ate numerous flies and worms and I began to suffer from indigestion.

86. Because of that I was unable to move and, seeing this, boys took me in their hands to play with.

87. They made fun of one another and I was moved from hand to hand, but soon a quarrel arose each saying, 'I saw the bird first'.

88. One of them snatched me away and threw me in Ganges. That happened to be the Somatīrtha and I breathed my last there.

89. Since I died there without any desire, by the power of that place, I was born, O mother, as your son on this holy day.

90. Thirteen years have passed since then and I have been hiding this truth from you all the time.

91. I have now told you the purpose of our coming here.

92. I shall now engage myself in what I have to do. I bow to you, O father, be pleased to return.

The parents said to the son again:

93. Whatever deeds you do to propitiate Lord Viṣṇu, the same we shall also do.

94. They became my devotees for a long time and performed actions laid down for liberation from *saṁsāra*.

95. In the end they died there and due to their determination and by the power of this place, they were liberated and they reached Śvetadvīpa.

96. All the attendants who had come there with them were endowed with health and wealth.

97. They acquired the smell of lotus, became yogins and felt happy by the prowess of this sacred spot.

98. Thus have I told you about this great story.

99. Such is the prosperity which this place bestows on those who go there. Even what is originally an animal goes to Śvetadvīpa attaining liberation.

100. He who reads this in the morning every day, liberates ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors.

101. This should not be read before fools or those who decry the śāstras or within the hearing of wicked people. It is best to recite it in solitude at home.

102. This should be recited before Brahmins who are well-versed in Veda, before devotees of Viṣṇu and those who are learned in śāstras.

103. It liberates from *saṁsāra* the pure and the humble.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYNINE

Greatness of Saukara—the benefits of Service in worship

Varāha said:

1. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you what merit accrues to a person who smears (the floor of the temple with cowdung).

2. He remains in heaven for as many thousands of years as the number of steps he smears with cowdung.

3. If he does this for twelve years, he is born in a family rich in money and grain.

4-5. He then goes to Kuśadvīpa and lives there as a great devotee of mine for twelve thousand years, honoured by the gods.

6. At the end of his life in Kuśadvīpa he is born as a king who upholds *dharma*.

7. He then becomes a great devotee fully dedicated to my service and adept in all śāstras.

8. He constructs many temples and ultimately reaches my world.

9. I shall tell you what world is attained by collecting cow-dung.

10. He who does this remains in heaven for as many thousands of years as the number of steps he goes to collect it.

11. Then he delights in the śālmaladvīpa for eleven thousand eleven hundred years.

12. Then leaving Śālmala he is born as a virtuous king and a great devotee.

13. He who carries cowdung for use in the temple remains in my world for twelve thousand years.

14. Now know the benefits that accrue to a person who bathes me, applies unguent and offers water.

15. He lords in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are drops in the water offered.

16. From heaven he descends to Krauñcadvīpa and from there he descends to be born as a king.

17. And then by his own merit he goes to Śvetadvīpa.

18. I shall tell you now, O Earth, about what befalls a man or woman who does the cleaning of my temples.

19. The pure devotee, free from all faults, remains in heaven for as many hundreds of years as there are particles of dust expelled by his sweeping.

20. From heaven he descends to Śākadvīpa and, remaining there for long, is born as virtuous king.

21. Then enjoying all pleasures in the world, he goes to Śvetadvīpa and remains in my eternal worship.

22-23. Listen now to what I tell you about the result of singing in my service.

24. He who sings for me remains exalted in the world of Indra for as many thousand years as there are syllables in the song.

25. He becomes handsome, virtuous, accomplished and proficient in Veda. He always sees Indra, the lord of gods.

26. He remains my devotee even while living in the world of Indra, always worshipping me.

27. Then from the world of Indra, he passes on to the garden Nandana and makes himself happy there in the company of Devas.

28. Then he is born in this world amidst Vaiṣṇavas always singing my glory in great devotion.

29. And then by my favour, he reaches my world.

Sūta said:

30. Hearing these words of Lord Mādhava, Earth exclaimed with folded hands:

Earth said:

31. How wonderful is the efficacy of singing ! Who are those who attained salvation by this means ?

Varāha said:

32. In a hermitage there, an outcaste was living as a devotee of mine keeping awake for a long time.

33. O fair goddess, though an outcaste, he had good qualities and was deeply inmersed in devotion, singing my praise for many years.

34. On the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, when all were asleep, he wandered about playing on Vīṇā.

35. While he was thus awake, he was caught by a Brahma-rākṣasa. The outcaste was week and the Brahmarākṣasa strong.

36. Grief-stricken, he was unable to move. He then spoke to the Brahmarākṣasa.

37. I am a mere wanderer. Why did you do this to me ? The Brahmarākṣasa then told him, being desirous of eating a man.

38. I have been going without food for ten days and now I have been given the food.

39. I shall eat you now with your flesh and blood and satisfy myself with this that Providence has given me.

40. Hearing the words of the Brahmarākṣasa, the outcaste who was still engaged in singing in devotion asked him to do what he liked.

41. I have now become your food given by Providence. You do what you think proper.

42. But I am now engaged in keeping awake and singing in praise of the Lord.

43. Let me finish my worship according to the rules and then you can eat me.

44. This vow of mine is for the propitiation of lord Viṣṇu and, when this is over, you may eat me.

45. Hearing these words of that outcaste, the Brahmarākṣasa who was extremely hungry, spoke to him in harsh words:

46. "Why do you try to cheat me by saying that you will come to me later. Can any man live after falling into the mouth of Death ? You wish to get out of it and then come back".

47. Hearing these words, the outcaste said again:

48. "Although now I am an outcaste because of my bad actions in my previous life, I am a pure man in my mind.

49. Listen to my promise of returning to you after my vow which is for the good of the world. I swear truly that I will return to you. So please release me.

50. The whole universe is based on truth, all the worlds rest

in truth. The sages who speak of Brahman get their attainments through truth.

51. By truth is a girl given in marriage, the Brahmins speak truth, kings win by truth.

52. Heaven is attained by truth, salvation is got by truth. The sun shines by truth and the moon sheds light by truth.

53. If I do not return to you, I will incur the same sin as accrues to a person who does not take bath on Ṣaṣṭhī, Aṣṭamī and Amāvāsyā days.

54. If I do not return to you, I will incur the same sin as accrues to a person who shares bed with the preceptor's wife and the king's wife.

55. If I do not return to you, I will incur the same sin as accrues to a person who is a beggar or a liar.

56. If I do not return to you, I will incur the same sin as accrues to a person who kills a Brahmin or drinks liquor or who does not complete a vow undertaken".

57. The Brahmarākṣasa was pleased at these words of the outcaste, he bowed to him and allowed him to go.

58. Released thus by the Brahmarākṣasa, the outcaste with determination again moved about singing my glory out of devotion.

59. When the day dawned, the singing and dancing were concluded, and uttering the name 'Nārāyaṇa' the outcaste began to return.

60. Then a man suddenly appeared there and spoke to him in appealing tone:

61. O good man, where are you going in such haste. That is the place of goblins and don't lose your life by going there.

62. Hearing these words of that man, the outcaste said:

63. I have to honour an agreement with the Brahmarākṣasa who wanted to eat me. I am speeding to him now.

64. Then the man told him in all earnestness.

65. O you poor outcaste, don't go to that place where lives that Brahmarākṣasa. It is not sinful to violate truth if it is to save your own life.

66. Then that austere outcaste said, determined to court death.

67. I shall not do as you say. I shall never sacrifice truth, come what may. That is my resolve.

68. The whole universe rests on truth, the family is established in truth, truth is the highest *dharma* and the soul has its basis in truth.

69. I shall never give up truth and take to falsehood. I bow to you. Be pleased to go.

70. The outcaste, who was thus firmly wedded to truth, went to that Rākṣasa, bowed to him and said:

71. I have now come to you. Eat me quickly. By that favour I shall be able to go to the abode of Viṣṇu.

72. Eat my body as you like and drink my warm blood. You are so full of hunger. Satisfy yourself and do me thus good.

73. Hearing these words of the outcaste, the Brahmarākṣasa told him:

74. I am pleased with you. You have upheld truth and righteousness. You have got this commendable mind, although being an outcaste, you do not know the rules.

75. Hearing these words of Brahmarākṣasa, the outcaste who was standing on truth, spoke to him endearingly.

76. Although I am an outcaste not entitled to perform rituals, I should always stand by truth.

77. Hearing these words of the outcaste, the terrible Brahmarākṣasa spoke to him again:

78-79. If you wish to save your life, give me the benefit of your having sung the glory of Viṣṇu throughout night. I shall then release you instead of eating you.

80. The outcaste then replied to the Brahmarākṣasa:

81. I am not able to know what you mean. You said that you will eat me. And now you want the fruit of my singing the praise of God.

82. The Brahmarākṣasa then said: Give me the merit of your singing for one watch of the night. Then I shall release you so that you can go to your wife and children.

83. At these words of the Rākṣasa, the outcaste who treasured the merit of his singing, told him with an air of determination.

84. O Brahmarākṣasa, I shall not give you the merit of my singing which you ask for. You may eat me and drink my blood.

85. The Rākṣasa then replied: Give me the merit of your singing once before Lord Viṣṇu. By that I shall be liberated.

86. The outcaste was wonderstruck at these words of the Rākṣasa and asked him:

87. What wrong did you commit that you became a Rākṣasa ?

88. The Brahmarākṣasa then spoke in great sorrow:

89. I was a Brahmin by name Somaśarmā belonging to the Caraka clan.

90. Without knowing the rules and *mantras* I used to perform sacrificial rituals for the credulous, because of my greed.

91. When once I was performing a sacrifice in this way, I was stricken by pain in the abdomen and I died as a result.

92. When, thus, the five-day long sacrifice was interrupted, a great sin befell me.

93. I became a Rākṣasa because of this objectionable deed.

94. Whatever I did without mantra, without proper accent, without following the code, the resultant form of all that I could see then.

95. By my own faults I became this Rākṣasa. It behoves you to liberate me from this by giving me the merit of your singing. Liberate me, this despicable self, by the song in praise of Viṣṇu.

96. The saintly outcaste was moved by these words of the Brahmarākṣasa and so he agreed and spoke to him:

97. O Rākṣasa, if it will make you pure and get you release, I shall give you the merit of my faultless singing.

98. He who faultlessly sings songs before Viṣṇu crosses all berriers. So saying he transferred to him his merit.

99. The Rākṣasa, thus getting the merit from the outcaste, became pure like the moon in autumn.

100. The outcaste continued to be a singer of my glory and, in the end, attained Brahman.

101. Such is the result, O Earth, that a person who sings for me gets.

102. He who sings on the Dvādaśī day of Kārttika, renounces everything and reaches my world.

103. He who sings songs in my praise during the period when I am awake, becomes detached from everything and attains my world.

104. I have thus told you about the efficacy of singing by which one is able to transcend this world.

105. I shall now tell you about the instrumental music which confers a position equal to the Gods.

106-107. By means of Śampā tāla or Sannipāta[1] one goes to the abode of Kubera and remains there for nine thousand nine hundred years.

108. Then from the abode of Kubera he moves about as he likes and finally reaches my world by the efficacy of the tālas like Śampā.

109. O Earth, I shall tell you now about the efficacy of dancing by which one is enabled to transcend the world.

110. He goes to Puṣkaradvīpa and moves about there as he likes for thirty three thousand years.

111. He becomes handsome, virtuous, valiant and always treading the right path. He gets release from *saṁsāra.*

112. He who dances for me with vocal and instrumental music, goes to Jambūdvīpa and is born there as an emperor.

113. He becomes an ardent protector of his subjects and remains a staunch devotee.

114. He who offers me flowers in ritualistic worship and places them on my head as much as it can hold,

115. (He) reaches my world by the efficacy of this action of his.

116. Thus have I told you what is conducive to the liberation from *saṁsāra* for my devotees.

117. He who recites this early in the morning liberates ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors.

118. This should not be read in the midst of fools or before wicked people. It should be read only before devotees who seek release.

119. This should not be read to the indifferent, the cruel and those who go to temple simply seeking food, if you wish for good.

120. This is the greatest of all *dharmas* and the greatest of all actions.

121. Don't read even a chapter of this to one who despises the śāstras if you wish to go to my world.

1. These are different kinds of keeping time-measure.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY

The greatness of holy spots in Kokāmukha

Earth said:

1. I have now known about the temples of which you spoke to me. But I wish to know in which place you reside for ever.

2. Which is that most exalted place where you remain as an idol? Which is the exalted place where the performance of actions leads to the attainment of the highest end?

Varāha said :

3. O you goddess, fond of devotees, I shall tell you about the places where I reside.

4. I have formerly told you about Kokāmukha. There in the Himālayas is a broad rocky surface called Badarī.

5. There is a spot called Lohārgala resorted to by the king of the Mlecchas. These are places from which I do not move out even for a moment.

6. This is the place where I am installed, although I am the entire universe and there is nothing in which I am not present.

7. Let those who wish to know the secret about me go to Kokāmukha soon.

8. Earth was glad to hear these words of the Lord. Holding her hands over her head, she spoke to him:

Earth said:

9. O lord of the worlds, I have great curiosity to know how Kokāmukha is great. Be pleased to tell me.

Varāha said:

10. There is no sacred spot greater than Kokāmukha, none more pure than Kokāmukha, no position higher than Kokāmukha's, nothing more dear than Kokāmukha.

11. He who goes to Kokāmukha never returns to *saṁsāra*. Whatever action is performed there, becomes conducive to the soul.

12. Among all the places about which you have asked, O Earth, a place which equals Kokāmukha never has been and never will be.

13. There in Kokāmukha is my hidden form.

Earth said:

14. O great lord, the refuge of devotees, be pleased to tell me about all the secrets of Kokāmukha.

Varāha said:

15. O goddess, listen. I shall tell you what you desire to know about this charming Kokāmukha.

16. There is a waterfall called Jalabindu in the mountain which is important. By performing rites there one reaches my world.

17. There is another waterfall in Kokā called Viṣṇudhārā which is like a club.

18. If one fasts there for a day and night and then takes bath, he acquires the result of a thousand Agniṣṭoma sacrifices.

19. He never fails in his duty and he attains full benefits. He is then born in a big family of my devotees.

20. One who gives up life at Viṣṇudhārā, doubtless sees this form of mine.

21. There is a place in Kokāmukha called Viṣṇupada dedicated to Varāha which is not known to many.

22. He who offers libations there after fasting during the night, will be born in Krauñcadvīpa as my devotee.

23. One who gives up life there, renounces everything and reaches my world.

24. Then there is the lake called Viṣṇusaras where I have played with you raising you up with my tusk.

25. One who bathes there early in the morning, becomes free from all sins and goes to my world.

26. In Kokā there is Somatīrtha where there is a spot of five slabs with the name of Viṣṇu marked therein.

27. One who bathes there after fasting for five days, is born as my devotee in Gomedadvīpa.

28. One who gives up life there, becomes free from all sins and sees me.

29. In my region in Kokā, there is Tuṅgakūṭa where water falls from the mountain in four streams.

30. One who takes bath there after fasting for five days goes to Kuśadvīpa and then to my world.

31. There is the place called Anityāśrama sacred for rituals which is not well known even to gods, why then speak of mortals?

32. One who bathes there after fasting for a day, is born as my devotee in Puṣkaradvīpa.

33. One who dies in this holy spot becomes free from all sins and goes to my world.

34. Then there is the highly holy Agnisaras where water falls from the mountain in five streams.

35. One who bathes there after fasting for five days, is born as my devotee in Kuśadvīpa.

36. One who dies there after performing the important rites, goes from Kuśadvīpa to the world of Brahmā.

37. There is the great spot called Brahmasaras where water falls in a single torrent on a slab.

38. One who bathes there after fasting for five days, becomes my devotee in Sūryaloka.

39. One who dies there goes from Sūryaloka to my world.

40. There is then the place called Dhenuvaṭa where a single torrent falls from a rock.

41. My devotee may take bath there after fasting for seven days.

42. He then gets the merit of having bathed in seven oceans and he may remain my devotee in all the seven islands.

43. My devotee who gives up life there, transcends the seven islands and reaches my world.

44. There is the place called *Dharmodbhava* in that holy region where a single torrent falls from the hill-top.

45. One should take bath there after fasting for a day. If he is a Śūdra he will be born a Vaiśya.

46. One who gives up life there, enjoys the fruit of all sacrifices and then reaches me.

47. There is the holy spot called Koṭivaṭa where a single torrent falls at the foot of a banyan tree.

48-49. One who bathes there after fasting for a night remains my devotee with all prosperity for as many thousands of years as there are leaves in that tree.

50. One who gives up life there after severe austerities, attains the colour of fire and reaches my world.

51. There is the place called Pāpapramocana where a single torrent falls shaped like a pot.

52. One who bathes there after fasting for a full day is born as a Brahmin proficient in all the four Vedas.

53. One who gives up life there resorting to the stream called Kauśikī and one who takes bath there after fasting for five days,

54. Revels in the world of Indra following the rules of my devotees.

55. One who gives up life there transcends the world of Indra and reaches my world.

56. There is another important spot called Yamavyasanaka where there is a torrent in the river Kauśikī.

57. One who takes bath there after fasting for a day, does not meet with adversity.

58. The devotee who gives up life there, becomes free from all sins and reaches my world.

59. In the same place there is a spot called Mātaṅga where there is another torrent in the same river Kauśikī.

60. One who takes bath there after fasting for day will be born in Kimpuruṣa and become fully purified.

61. One who gives up life there, transcends Kimpuruṣa and goes to my world.

62. There is another spot there called Vajrabhava where again, there is another torrent in the river Kauśikī.

63. One who takes bath there after fasting for one day, will be born in the world of Indra.

64. By the merit of the bath there, he gets a body like Indra's holding the weapon Vajra.

65. One who gives up life there meditating on me, transcends the world of Indra and reaches my world.

66. At a distance of three krośas from there, is the spot called Śakrarudra in the expansive rock in Kokāmukha.

67. One who takes bath there after fasting for three days, will be born in Jambūdvīpa where Jambū is rooted.

68. (One who gives up life there), transcends Jambūdvīpa and reaches my world.

69. O Earth, there is another important spot there by going where people cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

70. That is known as Daṁṣṭrāṅkura and is at one extremity of Kokāmukha. This is not so well known to people.

71. One who bathes there after fasting for a day, will be born as my devotee in Śālmalidvīpa.

72. One who gives up life there, transcends Śālmalidvīpa and reaches my world.

73. There is the spot called Viṣṇutīrtaha which brings about good to my devotees.

74. In it from the middle of the mountain in Kokā, there are three torrents.

75. He who bathes there snaps all ties with the world and goes to the world of Vāyu remaining in airy form.

76. The devotee who gives up life there, transcends the world of Vāyu and reaches my world.

77. There is a great spot called Sarvakāmikā where there is a famous rock at the place where the river Kauśikī enters Kokā.

78. One who performs bath there after fasting for a day will be born in a big family of devotees with the memory of the past.

79. By merely bathing there one attains whatever is desired in heaven or earth.

80. One who gives up life there, gives up all attachment and goes to my world.

81. There is the spot called Matsyaśilā in Kokāmukha where there are three torrents in the river Kauśikī.

82. If while bathing there, one sees a fish, it should be understood that I have gone there then on my own accord.

83. Seeing the fish there, the devotee shall offer water with honey and fried grain.

84. One who bathes there reaches Padmapatra to the north of Meru.

85. One who gives up life in Matsyaśilā, transcends the peak of Meru and reaches my world.

86. The Kokāmukha region extends over five yojanas. He who knows this is never stained by sin.

87. I shall tell you now another thing, O Earth ! I stand in the beautiful Kokāmukha facing south.

88. I remain there in human form with the face of the boar and complexion like sandalwood.

89. With the face raised on the left and the left tusk held up, I see the whole universe and my devotees there.

90. The sinless persons meditate on me there and perform actions meant to secure liberation.

91. If a person happens to die in Kokāmukha, he never returns to this world but attains a form similar to mine.

92. This Kokāmukha is a great place, the greatest secret and the greatest attainment.

93. I tell you the truth that what is acquired by the processes of Sāṅkhya or Yoga will never be equal to what is acquired by going to Kokāmukha.

94. I have thus told you what you desired to know. What else do you wish to ask?

95. He who reads this liberates ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors.

96. After death, he will be born in a family of pure devotees and will be solely devoted to me.

97. He who listens to this early in the morning, snaps all potentialities of his future lives and becomes my staunch devotee.

98. He who recites this account of the greatness of Kokāmukha early in the morning reaches my Supreme abode. There need be no doubt in this matter.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYONE

The greatness of Badarikāśrama

Varāha said:

1. Now listen to another secret on the surface of the Himavat mountain, namely the holy place Badarī which is not easily accessible even to Devas.

2. People do not reach there by their actions, however difficult to perform they may be. They reach only by devotion this place which liberates all.

3. It is not easy to reach this place of mine in the rocky peak full of snow. But he who is able to go there will be really gratified.

4. In that heap of rocks there is Brahmakuṇḍa. O Earth, I remain there in that snow.

5. The man who bathes there after fasting for three nights attains merit equal to performing Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

6. And, if after performing the vows and with full control of the senses, he gives up life there, he crosses Satyaloka and reaches my world.

7. In that place, there is the spot called Agnisatyapada, where water falls in torrents from three peaks.

8. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights becomes truthful, clever and devoted to my service.

9. He who dies there too, crosses Satyaloka and reaches my world and enjoys there.

10. In Badarī, there is my hermitage known as Indraloka where I was most sincerely propitiated by Indra.

11. Here too from the peaks water falls in big torrents in a broad slab which is dear to me.

12. He who bathes there after fasting for a night becomes truthful and pure and remains high in Satyaloka.

13. And he who gives up life there after performing the vow called Anāśaka, crosses Satyaloka and reaches my world.

14. There is the tīrtha called Pañcaśikha in Badarī where water falls from five peaks.

15. He who bathes there attains the merit of Aśvamedha sacrifice and delights himself in the company of Devas.

16. He who dies there after performing all austerities, crosses Svargaloka and remains high in my world.

17. In that great place of mine there is the spot called Catuḥsrotas where water falls in streaks, one each in the four directions.

18. He who bathes there after fasting for a night delights in heaven and becomes my devotee.

19. And if he dies there after performing all austerities, crosses heaven and reaches my world.

20. There is another spot called Vedadhāra there wherein from the mouths of Brahmā emanated the four Vedas.

21. Four big peaks are there in that place in the Himālaya and from these four torrents fall.

22. He who bathes there after fasting for four nights gets the capacity to easily master the four Vedas.

23. And if he dies there standing in my service, he crosses the world of Devas and reaches my world.

24. Then there is another spot called Dvādaśādityakuṇḍa, where the twelve Ādityas were settled by me.

25. There on a big slab fall twelve streaks of water facilitating service to me.

26. He who bathes in any one of these twelve streaks, goes there where the twelve Ādityas lord.

27. And if he dies there, he crosses the place of these Ādityas and remains high in my world.

28. There is the spot called Lokapāla where the guardians of quarters were settled by me.

29. There in the middle of the mountain is a pond from where by splitting the rocks arose Soma.

30. He who bathes there on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Jyeṣṭha, delights with guardian deities of the quarters and becomes my devotee.

31. And if he dies there, remaining in my service, he crosses the world of these guardian deities and reaches my world.

32. There is a very holy spot called Merorvara from where the Mount Meru settled itself.

33. Three torrents bright like gold fall from there but become invisible at the place where they fall.

34. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights, delights himself in the peaks of Meru and becomes my devotee.

35. And if he dies there, he crosses the Meru and reaches my world.

36. There is another important tīrtha called Mānasodbheda where water gushes forth piercing the earth.

37. Even Devas do not know about this place, but men know since the water comes forth from under the earth.

38. He who bathes there after fasting for a full day and night delights in the heavenly Mānasa and becomes my devotee.

39. Then there is the holy spot called Pañcaśira where Brahmā clipped off one of his heads.

40. Five ponds are there amidst big rocks in the place of five heads.

41. The one in the centre has water red in colour and this represents the head cut off by Brahmā.

42. He who bathes there after fasting for five nights, delights in Brahmaloka and becomes my devotee.

43. And if he dies in this Pañcaśira after performing Jalacāndrāyaṇa and remaining steadfast in my service,

44. He becomes clever and prudent and free from desire and stupor, and crossing the Brahmaloka reaches my world.

45. There is another tīrtha named Somābhiṣeka, where Soma (Moon) was crowned by me as the king of Brahmins.

46. O Earth, I was propitiated there by the Moon by austerities numbering fourteen crores.

47. He attained great powers because of this. The whole world is now dependent on him, as also the cereals and all herbs.

48. Skanda, Indra and Maruts are born from him and also disappear in him, and everything will be of Soma.

49. There is a spot called Somagiri where there is a torrent of water falling in cavity.

50. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights, delights himself in the world of Soma.

51. And if he dies there after performing austerities, he crosses Somaloka and reaches my world.

52. In that sacred Badarī there is the holy Urvaśīkuṇḍa where Urvaśī was born out of the right thigh.

53. There I was performing penance for the sake of Devas. None knew me.

54. A long time passed as I was performing penance there. Even the gods like Indra, Brahmā and Śiva did not know me then.

55. Result is certain in Badarī and I performed penance for many thousands of years.

56. In fact, I continued like that for millions of years.

57. As I was in this secret place, Devas could not see me and they became very sad.

58. O Earth, while I was engaged in that penance, I could see every one, but none could see me because of my power of illusion.

59. Then the gods went to Brahmā and told him that without Viṣṇu they could have no peace of mind.

60. Hearing the words of Devas, Brahmā said that I was concealed from them by the enveloping Māyā.

61. Then Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Saints became very much pleased.

62. Headed by Indra they came where I was and said:

63. "O Lord, we are all unhappy being forsaken by you. Save us by your blessing".

64. I then cast a glance at them and they became happy.

65. He who bathes in the Urvaśīkuṇḍa after fasting for a

night, gets absolved of all sins and delights in the Urvaśīloka for all time.

66. And he who gives up life there remaining in my service, becomes freed of all merits and sins and merges in me.

67. He who thinks of this holy Badarī reaches the abode of Viṣṇu never to return.

68. He who listens to this or recites this remaining truthful, celibate and free from anger,

69. Or remaining in contemplation and he who understands the secret of such contemplation,

70. And understands the self, attains supreme beatitude.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYTWO

Action in Privacy[1]

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of the Lord, Earth, desirous of *dharma*, propitiated him with folded hands.

Earth said:

2. O Mādhava, be pleased to listen to what this servant of yours with tender nature has to say.

3. Women do not have the stamina to do all that you said now without taking food.

4. So tell me how these can attain happiness even if they take food with your blessing.

5. Hearing these words of Earth, the Lord laughed and said:

Varāha said:

6. O fair goddess, it is good that you asked me about this secret conducive to my devotees.

7. She who is my devotee, if she feels anything impure, may touch my image wherever it is.

1. This relates to women in their monthly period.

8. If, while performing austerities, the need for food is felt, it can certainly be taken with mind set in me.

9. If a woman gets menses (in the course of her austerities), she does not incur sin if she takes food after uttering this mantra with hands folded over the head: "I in my monthly course, bow to the great Lord who is unborn and has no beginning or end.

10. There is no harm in her doing things after taking food with this mantra.

11-12. Taking bath on the fifth day (from the occurrence of menses), if she duly performs worship with mind solely set in me and without thinking of worldly life she may attain manhood.

Earth said:

13. Men or women are really neither men nor women (of the type they ought to be). How can they be liberated from the bondage of worldly life ?

Varāha said:

14-15. Controlling all their sense organs and steadying their mind, if I am meditated upon steadfastly, it is *Sannyāsayoga*. One that does it, whether it be a man, woman or hermaphrodite, attains supreme bliss.

16. I shall tell you another thing, please listen. The mind, intellect and thought are not usually within the control of man.

17. But he, who with the power of knowledge, is able to fix it unflinchingly on one object and keep it in poise, is not stained by anything.

18. He who has the poised mind set in me, does not incur the result of any action even if he takes all kinds of food and drink, prescribed or prohibited.

19-20. If the mind, intellect and thought are poised and set in me, then one is not affected by whatever one does, like the water on the lotus leaf.

21. O Goddess, let the mind be well poised whether it is for the whole day and night, for an hour or even for a moment.

22. One attains the supreme aim if the mind is well poised even if he does all kinds of things day and night.

23. What fear has he who always thinks of me, awake or asleep, hearing or seeing ?

24. I praise him who has nothing else in mind, be he a Caṇḍāla doing heinous deeds or a Brahmin who has strayed into the wrong path.

25-26. Those who perform sacrifices knowing *dharma* well, endowed with proper knowledge and mind set in me, those who always think of me and perform actions dear to me and those who, in dedication to me, sleep well free from care, and those who are tranquil in mind, all of them are dear to me.

27. Those who do actions, good or bad, thinking of themselves alone, are very base men and they bring upon themselves suffering.

28. It is the mind that leads to ruin in this world, and it is the same mind that is the cause of liberation also. O Earth, therefore, let me be attained with the mind set on me.

29. Dedicating *Jñāna* (knowledge) and *Yoga* (action) to me, let me be worshipped with steadfast devotion.

30. He who with due austerities has the mind always set on me, comes near me and becomes eligible to be in me.

31. The rule that a woman should be cohabited with after her monthly course, was laid down by me for the sake of progeny.

32. If one does not cohabit (with his wife) soon after her period, with full concentration of mind and wishing my blessing, ten generations of the ancestors and ten generations of the descendants are harmed.

33. Let one approach the wife with a sense of duty to his ancestors and not with the motive of carnal pleasure or impelled by lust.

34. Let not a second woman be touched even if urged by uncontrollable passion, so too a third and never a fourth.

35. After cohabitation, let one not have the curiosity to see the women laying in the bed, in order to maintain purity.

36. When once the thing is over, my devotee shall bathe in water and change his cloth.

37. He who cohabits before the stopping of the monthly course, doubtless makes his manes drink semen.

38. A man cohabits with one woman (for the sake of *dharma*) with a second due to passion. He who does it with a third or fourth is indeed a depraved person.

39. This is a rule which I have made for the entire world.

40. Soon after the period, cohabitation is laid down for the sake of the manes. He who cohabits at this time (alone) is considered celibate enough.

41. The man who wanders away at this time without cohabiting with the wife, due to anger or delusion, incurs the sin of killing the embryo.

42. I shall tell you another thing, O Earth, please listen. It is knowledge relating to *Cittayoga* and action relating to *Karmayoga*.

43. People reach my place by action, also by singing of me; so too by contemplation. There is no other course (for this).

44. Jñāna, Yoga and Sāṅkhya are all based on the mind and those that follow the path I have shown, will achieve their aim.

45. O Earth, during the monthly period, one may remain for three days on air alone.

46. On the fourth day such actions as conducive to the attainment of the aim, may be done, but none else.

47. The head should be cleansed by bath, white cloth should be worn, and the mind should be made steady.

48. The prescribed deeds may then be done. Those who do so are dear to me indeed.

49. Then after worshipping me they may take food and bow to me with hands folded over the head.

50. The mantra for this is: "You are the first of all beings and you have no end. O Lord, we who were in our monthly course, bow to you. We have fasted for three days and we bow to you now when the menstrual flow has stopped."

51. O Earth, the women after their course become purified by this mantra and they may do the actions that are to be done after bath as well as those to be done before bath.

52. In this way man or woman does not get any harm and those who do actions laid down by me are dear to me.

53. And they become more and more inclined to do what is dear to me, even if they be defiled by association with the monthly period.

54. And those desirous of attaining the supreme, may give up everything and with full control of the senses and deep concentration of mind, meditate on me.

55. They get the result, be they men, women or hermaphrodites, irrespective of their knowledge and actions.

56. People who are caught in *Saṁsāra* do not know me yet. Those who are engaged in devotion to me alone know me.

57. Fathers and mothers in thousands, and sons and daugthers in hundreds, revolve like a wheel and as a result of this stupefaction, they are unable to know me.

58. The world is enveloped by ignorance and subjected by delusion. It is also bound by many attachments. It is difficult to wean the mind clear from all this.

59. The mother goes away, the father goes away, so too the sons and servants.

60. They are born according to their own deeds.

61. Even those with knowledge, if they are deluded by *saṁsāra* remain (in my world) for a short while only, a few months or years, and are born again and do not remain with me.

62. But he to whom the *Nyāsayoga* (dedicating everything to me) is known, releases himself, no doubt.

63. He who listens to this (account) early in the morning soon after waking up, acquires great attainments and goes to my world.

64. Thus I have told you the secret about which you asked me for the favour of devotees.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYTHREE

Greatness of Mandāra

Varāha said:

1. O fair goddess, I shall tell you now about another place which is important to my devotees. Please listen.

2. This is known as Mandāra and is situated on the right side of river Gaṅgā, on a plateau in Vindhya.

3. In Tretāyuga will be born the brilliant Rāma and he will consecrate me there.

4. Hearing these words from the mouth of Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth desirous of *dharma*, spoke to him in sweet tone.

Earth said:

5. O great Lord, you were pleased to tell me about the holy place called Mandāra.

6. What rites do people perform there and to what worlds do they go?

7. What are the secrets about Mandāra? I am eager to know all this. Please tell me.

Varāha said:

8. I shall tell you all that you ask, the rites in Mandāra and the secrets.

9. I was playing there when the Mandāra tree was in flower and I placed one of its beautiful flowers on my chest.

10. Then in the place where the Mandāra was standing in the mountain, eleven ponds appeared.

11. I remained in that place beneath the Mandāra for the sake of devotees.

12. It is an attractive spot with a beautiful slab where I stood beside that tree.

13. You may know the wonder of this Mandāra. It flowers only on the Dvādaśī and Caturdaśī days.

14. And this occurs during the noon. No flower can be seen in it on any other day.

15. The man who bathes in the Mandārakuṇḍa attains supreme bliss.

16. He who dies there after performing austerities, goes to my world.

17. On its northern side is the hill called Prāpaṇa where three torrents fall on the southern side.

18. This is known as the Snānakuṇḍa in that place and here the water that falls on the south flows northwards.

19. He who bathes there after fasting for a night delights himself on the southern peak of Mount Meru.

20. And he who dies there giving up all attachments, reaches my world.

21. On its north-eastern side is the spot Vaikuṇṭhakāraṇa where a torrent falls green in colour.

22. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, reaches heaven and enjoys with the gods.

23. And he who gives up his life there after full gratification, liberates his whole family and reaches my world.

24. On its south-eastern side on the peaks of the Vindhya is an even fall of water entering into a deep pond beneath.

25. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, delights himself on the eastern side of Mount Meru.

26. And he who gives up his life there with mind set in me, cuts off all connections with worldly life and reaches my world.

27. On the eastern side of Mandāra is a Koṭara where a torrent falls in the shape of a mace.

28. He who bathes there after foregoing five meals, delights himself on the eastern side of Mount Meru.

29. And he who gives up life there after performing austerities, crosses the peak of Meru and reaches my world.

30. On its southern side is Vindhyavinissṛta where five torrents fall in the shape of maces.

31. He who bathes there after fasting for one day and night, delights himself on the southern peak of Mount Meru.

32. And he who gives up life there after performing austerities, crosses the peak of Meru and reaches my world.

33. In the south-western side of Mandāra falls a torrent shining like the sun.

34. He who bathes there after fasting for a day and night delights himself on the Western side where (the star) Dhruva shines.

35. And he who gives up life there remaining in my devotion, gets freed from all sins and delights himself in my world.

36. On its western side is the deep lake called Cakrāvarta.

37. He who bathes there giving up five meals, delights himself freely in the peaks of Meru.

38. And he who gives up life there, crosses all peaks of Meru and delights himself in my presence.

39. On the north-western side of this rocky place in the Vindhya, there are three torrents, also shaped like maces.

40. He who bathes there with mind set on me, delights himself in all peaks (of Meru).

41. And he who gives up life there giving up all attachments, reaches my world.

42. At a short distance from it on the southern side is the deep lake called Gabhīraka.

43. He who bathes there after fasting for eight nights, enjoys himself freely in all islands.

44. And he who gives up life there remaining in devotion to me, leaves all these islands and reaches my world.

45. On its western side is the great Parama where seven torrents fall into a deep lake.

46. He who bathes there after fasting for a day and night, delights himself freely in the world of Indra.

47. And he who gives up life there remaining constant in my service, gets free from all attachments and reaches my world.

48. Now listen to this namely that Syamantapañcaka is in this mount Mandāra.

49. I remain in the heap of rocks in Mandāra at the top of the mountain Vindhya.

50. The cakra (disc) is on the right, gadā (club) is on the left, śaṁkha (conch), lāṅgala (plough) and musala (mace) stand in front.

51. I have told all this to you and for the sake of devotees.

52. Being deluded by my Māyā, people do not know this, except the pure devotees and those who resort to this Varāha.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYFOUR

Greatness of Someśvara, Muktikṣetra, Triveṇī and others

Sūta said:

1. Hearing about the greatness of Mandāra, Earth, who was desirous of *dharma,* was full of wonder and asked the Lord.

Earth said:

2. By your favour I got an idea of Mandāra. Be pleased to tell me now about what is even more important than that.

Varāha said:

3. Listen to me, O goddess, for what you wish to know. I shall tell you about Śālagrāma.

4. In Dvāparayuga in the clan of Yadus in which is the leader Śūra,

5. To whom is born Vasudeva of righteous actions,

6. Whose wife is the highly beautiful Devakī,

7. To her I will be born known as Vāsudeva to the Devas destroying all enemies.

8. In that place of Yādavas was a Brahmarṣi by name Sālaṅkāyana.

9. He was wandering in all ten quarters to worship me and then performed penance at the peak of Meru for getting a son.

10. He then went to Piṇḍāraka and from there to Lohārgala and so on for a thousand years.

11. As I was in my form together with Śiva, he could not see me in any of those places.

12. O Earth, I was together with Śiva, and Sālaṅkāyana was performing penance.

13. In that mount Śālagrāma, Śiva united with me remains as a stone.

14. I, of course, remain there in the form of the mount and all the stones there represent me.

15. All these stones are fit for worship, particularly those which have the cakra-marks in them. And Śiva remains in the form of a Liṅga in a temple in that hill.

16. There are stones there marked by the liṅga and also those marked by cakra. The hill itself is in the form of a liṅga and is lorded by Someśvara.

17. This is because it was established there by Soma (Moon) and named after himself. He performed penance there for a thousand years for release from a curse.

18. When he was freed from the curse, he regained his effulgence and strength and then extolled Śiva,

19. Who emerged as a giver of boons from Someśvara.

Soma said:

20. I bow to Śiva, the lord of Umā, five-faced, blue-necked and three-eyed, calm and eager to bless the devotees;

21. The divine, adorned by all Devas, having moon on the crest, holding the bow Pināka in the hand, the lord of gods, the refuge of devotees;

22. Holding the trident, bearing the Ḍamaru and riding the bull, praised by the gaṇas with different kinds of fierce faces;

23. Mahākāla, the destoryer of Tripuras, the vanquisher of demons like Andhaka, wearing the elephant's skin and adorned with the tiger-skin;

24. Having as the *Upavīta*, the serpent's body, holding the string of rudrākṣa, lord of all, though without a form assuming forms according to the devotees' desire;

25. Having the sun, moon and fire as the eyes, beyond the reach of words and mind, with prominent matted tresses and shoulders washed by Gaṅgā;

26. Having Kailāsa as abode and with hermitage in the Himālaya.

Praised thus, Lord Śiva spoke to Soma:

27. Seek a boon of me of what is in your mind, now that you have the rare opportunity of getting me before you.

Soma said:

28. O Lord, if you are pleased to give me a boon let it be that your presence is always there in this liṅga known after my name to grant the desires of devotees.

The great lord said:

29. I shall remain in this place for ever where the presence of Viṣṇu is also there, particularly in this Liṅga installed by you.

30. O moon, know that you are only a form of mine. I shall grant boons to all those that worship this Liṅga, even more than for the gods.

31. By the power of the penance of sage Sālaṅkāyana, I am here together with Viṣṇu.

32. The hill Śālagrāma is Viṣṇu and this Someśvara is myself. The stones here represent both Viṣṇu and Śiva.

33. Revā (the river Narmadā) once performed penance to propitiate Śiva that a son like him may be born to her.

34. I am not the son of any and shall not be of any. But the desire of Revā had to be fulfilled.

35. Thinking thus, I spoke to her with pleasant mind:

36. I shall be within you as son, but in the form of the liṅga and along with Gaṇeśa.

37. You are really myself in my form as water. We remain together as Śiva and Śakti.

38. Receiving the boon, Revā came to my presence here which came to be known as Revākhaṇḍa thereafter.

39. Gaṇḍakī (the river) also formerly performed penance for a thousand divine years, first living on fallen leaves and then on air alone, with a view to propitiate Viṣṇu.

40. Then Viṣṇu who always favours his devotees, appeared there and spoke:

41. O Gaṇḍakī, I am surprised and pleased at your penance and unflinching devotion.

42. Please ask what boon you desire. I am ready to grant it.

43. Seeing before her the Lord bearing the conch, disc and mace, she prostrated and began to praise.

44. O great god, I have seen you, difficult to be seen even by the Yogins. The entire world was created by you.

45. You then entered into it and hence you are known as Puruṣa. In this world which emanated as a result of your *līlā* (play) who is free?

46. O Viṣṇu, you are Brahman which is spoken of as without beginning or end and without limit. He who knows you is really the knower of the Vedas.

47. Your supreme power is the Universal Mother. She is called Yogamāyā, Prakṛti and Pradhāna.

48. Puruṣa is without qualities, is indistinct (*avyakta*), of the nature of knowledge, pure consciousness, actionless and unchanging.

49. By entering Yogamāyā you (Puruṣa) became the doer. It is Prakṛti that (really) creates and you who (simply) see it are called Sākṣī.

50-51. When Prakṛti by the three qualities is performing creation, you become its cause by your presence alone like the red colour in a clear colourless crystal by the presence of a shoe-flower nearby. Its light is because of your lustre. I bow to it.

52. How can I know that form of yours which cannot be known even by such seers like Brahmā?

53. I remain in this stupefied world without knowing anything. I do not know which has merit and which has not. I am simply held by you.

54. I attained a position in this world by your favour alone. now I ask you something out of my ignorance. All the same, it behoves you to give me that.

55. You are indeed very kind and so do not say 'No' .

56. Then the Lord said: Ask me whatever you like even if it is something which is not normally granted and is difficult for men to get.

57. Who has got his desire not fulfilled after seeing me ?

58. O Soma, then that holy Gaṇḍakī spoke in sweet words with folded hands: If you are pleased to grant me the boon I ask, then may you enter my womb and be born as my son.

59. The Lord was pleased and he thought:

60. What is it that is asked by this river desirous of constant contact with me? Still, I shall grant boon for the emancipation of the world.

61. So thinking, he told Gaṇḍakī:

62. O goddess, listen to me. For the sake of devotees, I have already become your son, as I am lying within you in the form of Śālagrāma stones.

63. You will become the foremost among rivers because of my presence in you.

64. By seeing you, touching you, bathing in you or drinking your water, you remove all sins acquired through thought, word or deed.

65. He who bathes (in you) according to the prescribed rules and performs oblations to the manes, leads them all to heaven and himself goes to Brahmaloka.

66. And he who gives up life in you while remaining devoted to me, reaches my abode from where he never returns.

67. After giving these boons, he disappeared. From then onwards, O Soma, in this place I and Viṣṇu reside together in the form desired by the devotees.

68. So saying the lord (Śiva) blessed Soma and stroked his limbs making them free from all ills.

69. And while he was looking on, Śiva disappeared there.

70. To the south of Someśvara is the holy waterfall that arose as a result of Rāvaṇa splitting the mountain there by an arrow.

71. It is known as Bāṇagaṅgā and it is capable of removing all sins.

72. To the east of Someśvara is the penance-grove of Rāvaṇa. By spending three days there, one attains the result of penance.

73. This place is known as Nartanācala, because Rāvaṇa danced here, and pleased at it Śiva gave him boons.

74. He who bathes in the Bāṇagaṅgā and worships Bāṇeśvara attains the result of bathing in Gaṅgā and delights in heaven like the gods.

75. O Earth, I shall now tell you another secret.

76. Sālaṅkāyana was performing severe penance at Śālagrāma desirous of getting a son like Śiva.

77. Knowing this, Lord Śiva assumed the form of a beautiful boy (Nandī) through Yogamāyā and stood beside him as his son.

78. Although he was standing close on his right, the sage did not notice him.

79. Śiva (as Nandī) with the power of Māyā was there, beautiful, virtuous and shining like the sun, with the trident in hand. But the sage did not notice the son, being immersed in contemplating on me.

80. Then, at the command of Lord Śiva, Nandī told the sage laughing:

81. O great sage, rise up. Your desire has borne fruit. I am your son born of your right side. Tell me what I should do?

82. You started penance with the aim of getting a son like Śiva. None else is there like me. So I am myself now born to you.

83. Worshipping Lord Viṣṇu through penance, you have attained your desire, since I am here your son.

84. The sage was extremely glad to hear these words of Nandī.

85. But he was surprised and asked him: If my penance has borne fruit as you say, how is it that Lord Viṣṇu has not appeared before me?

86. As long as I am not able to see him, I don't think my penance can come to a close. So I shall continue to be here till I am able to see Viṣṇu.

87-88. My son, by the power of your yoga, quickly go to Mathurā and bring from there my disciple Āmuṣyāyaṇa from my hermitage and the wealth and cows there.

89. At this command, Nandī quickly went to Mathurā and reached the hermitage of the sage.

90. He saw Āmuṣyāyaṇa there and asked him about the well being of himself and about the wealth and cows.

91. Āmuṣyāyaṇa said: "Everything is all right because of the blessing of my guru. Tell me how he is and where.

92. Where are you coming from and what is the purpose of your coming?

93. Tell me all this and receive this *arghya*.

94. So requested, he received the *arghya* and, after taking rest for a while, told him about his guru and the purpose with which he had been sent.

95. Then he started with him and the wealth and cows and, after a few days, reached the bank of Gaṇḍakī. And from there he reached Triveṇī and felt very happy there.

96. There is the river Devikā which arose as a result of the penance of Devas. This joins Gaṇḍakī.

97. Another flows by the hermitage of Pulastya and Pulaha and this too joins Gaṇḍakī. Thus Gaṇḍakī becomes Triveṇī (three-streamed).

98. This confluence is the great tīrtha called Kāmika, dear to the Pitṛs. There we get the great Liṅga called Trijaleśvara.

99. It gives both enjoyment and salvation at its very sight.

Earth said:

100. In Prayāga there is Triveṇī where Śiva remains with the name Śūlaṭaṅka and also as Someśvara;

101. Where Viṣṇu remains with the name Veṇīmādhava, and the rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī meet;

102. Where, I have heard, is the presence of all Devas and Sages and all Tīrthas;

103. By bathing where one goes to heaven and, dying, gets salvation; which is the king of all tīrthas and is one liked by Viṣṇu most.

104. This is the well known Triveṇī. But now you speak of another and speak of it as a secret.

105. Therefore tell me this out of compassion for me and for the good of the world.

Varāha said:

106. Listen, O goddess, I shall tell you what you seek to know, also a story connected therewith.

107. In days of yore, Viṣṇu performed penance for the sake of the world in a beautiful mountain, the Himālayas, resorted to by the gods.

108. After a long lapse of time, a great effulgence emanated from him.

109. By its heat profuse sweat emanated in the cheeks, and this formed into a river capable of removing sins.

110. This caused wonder in all the worlds, but none could know its origin.

111. All the gods then went to Brahmā full of eagerness, and asked about the source of this.

112. Being affected by the Māyā of Viṣṇu, Brahmā too could not know. So he led the gods to Śiva.

113. Seeing him there with the gods, he asked them the cause of their visit.

114. Brahmā bowed to the great lord and said: O Maheśvara, there is a wonderful effulgence by which the whole world is affected.

115. But how it came and from where we are unable to know.

116. Śiva then meditated for a while and told Brahmā and others that he would show them its source.

117. He then, with Umā and Gaṇas, led Devas to the place where Viṣṇu was performing penance.

118. He then asked him: You are the creator of the worlds and their sustainer. With what purpose, then, do you perform this penance ?

119. You are the source of everything and the master of everything. What is there difficult for you to obtain ?

Lord Viṣṇu then bowed to him and said:

120. I undertook this presence for the sake of the world, to see you and to get boons from you.

121. Having seen you now, I am fully gratified, O lord of the worlds.

Śiva said:

122. This is Muktikṣetra where by the mere sight one gets salvation. Here flows the great river Gaṇḍakī which arose from the sweat of cheeks (*gaṇḍa*).

123. In future you will lodge yourself within it. And then because of your presence there,

124. Myself, Brahmā, gods, sages, sacrifices and Tīrthas will remain in the Gaṇḍakī for ever.

125. He who bathes in it during the whole month of Kārttika, becomes free from all sins and attains salvation.

126. This is the tīrtha of all tīrthas and the most auspicious.

127. By bathing here one gets the merit of bathing in Gaṅgā, and by its thought, sight or touch one gets free of all sins.

128. There is nothing comparable to it other than Gaṅgā. Gaṇḍakī is extremely holy and gives enjoyment and salvation.

129. Another by name Devikā mingles with Gaṇḍakī.

130. Pulastya and Pulaha formerly performed intense penance in separate hermitages for ordering creation and attained the skill therefore.

131. From there arose the holy river Brahmatanayā and it mingles with Gaṇḍakī.

132. There is thus, the Triveṇī which is very holy even for the gods.

133. There were Jaya and Vijaya, sons of sage Tṛṇabindu, a repository of the Vedas, who were engaged for a sacrifice by a king, but became sinful.

134. They were highly learned in the Vedas and clever in sacrifices.

135. They were worshipping Viṣṇu with full concentration of mind, and the Lord's presence was there every day before them being drawn by their intense devotion.

136. These two Brahmins were invited for a sacrifice by king Marutta.

137. At the end of the sacrifice, they were given handsome dakṣiṇās.

138. Reaching home, they thought of dividing daksiṇā between them and then arose a quarrel.

139. Jaya the elder, was for equal division, while Vijaya, the younger, was for each taking what he had got.

140. Jaya (who had got less) thereby became angry. He said: Since, having received you don't give me, may you become a crocodile.

141. Vijaya too said: Since you have become blind with the money, may you become an elephant which will be *madāndha* (blind with pride). Thus they became a crocodile and an elephant by mutual curse.

142. Vijaya became crocodile in Gaṇḍakī with memory of his past and in the place Triveṇī Jaya became elephant playing with female and young elephants.

143. Thousands of years passed for them and the curses were still working on.

144. Once the elephant got down into the stream Triveṇī along with his herd.

145. He enjoyed himself there playing with the rest, pouring water on the female elephants and drinking water offered by them.

146-147. While he was playing thus, the crocodile, remembering the former enmity, caught hold of his leg firmly by the teeth.

148. The elephant too dragged the crocodile and a fight ensued between them.

149. By the dragging of the elephant and biting of the crocodile in the course of the fight, many other creatures became wounded or dead.

150. Then the king Jaleśvara of the place made a request to the lord (to stop this fight).

151. Thereupon the lord, the protector of the devotees, smashed the mouth of the crocodile with the cakra Sudarśana.

152. While moving around again and again in the water, the cakra hit the stones, and, as a result, they became marked by it.

153. In that place the Vajra worms became abundant and they too made the marks.

154. Thus I have told you about the greatness of Triveṇīkṣetra. You need not have any doubt in this matter.

155. King Bharata worshipped Viṣṇu and Trijaleśvara near the hermitage of sage Pulastya.

156. And then he could give up his animal body and become himself again[1].

157. The worship of Jaleśvara generates the power of Yoga.

158. O Earth, aware of my presence in this place Śālagrāma, Jaleśa praised me.

159. Then due to my affection for the devotees, I threw my Sudarśana. The place which it hit first, became the holy Tīrtha.

160. By bathing there, one goes to the world of the sun and remains resplendent there, and by dying there, he goes to my world.

161. For protection of my devotee, I directed the Sudarśana. Wherever it rotated, the stones became marked by it.

162. Then spending there five nights according to the rules, he (Nandī) went with the cows and wealth to Harikṣetra (i.e. Śālagrāma).

163. Since lord Hari remains there, it became a place of worship.

164. From the time Nandī with the cows and the trident in hand stood there, the place came to be known as Hariharaprabha.

165. Since Devas frequent there, it also came to be known as Devāṭa. Who can adequately describe the greatness of this god ?

166. This god with trident in hand and protecting his devotees, is resorted to by sages, gods and Gandharvas.

167. It was in this place that the great god Śiva became son to Sālaṅkāyana in the form of Nandī.

168. He is a great yogin himself who bestows on others the power of yoga. And he remains in a high pedestal in this tīrtha Triveṇī.

169. Three streams fell down from the three streaks of Śiva's matted hair and these are Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī.

170-171. These three fell from his matted hair when he was sitting in yogic contemplation in the place Śālagrāma meditating on Viṣṇu and imparting knowledge to his devotees for release from *saṁsāra*.

172. He who bathes in this triple stream and performs oblations to the manes and worships the great yogin Śiva, never takes another life.

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1. The reference is to the story of Jaḍabharata narrated in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa Skandha 5.

173. On the east of this place is the Haṁsatīrtha. I shall tell you something interesting about it.

174. Once, on a Śivarātrī day, devotees were performing worship to Śiva with many kinds of *naivedyas*.

175. Many crows came there with a view to eating these *naivedyas*. One crow snatched a bit of it and flew into the sky.

176. To snatch it away from this crow, another crow began to fight with it. Then both fell down into a pool below.

177. There they were transformed into *Haṁsas* (swans) lustrous like the moon. Seeing this wonder, the people present there called that pool Haṁsatīrtha.

178. From then onwards that came to be known as Haṁsatīrtha.

179. It was originally made by a Yakṣa and hence it was known then as Yakṣatīrtha.

180. He who bathes there gets purified and goes to the world of Yakṣas. And he who dies there with devotion to Śiva, crosses Yakṣaloka and reaches my world.

181. Of such effect is this tīrtha because of the prowess of Mahāyogī Śiva. Both I and Śiva are there blessing the world.

182. I have now told you all this secret, O Earth. This kṣetra extends over twelve yojanas commencing from Muktikṣetra and proceeding to Śālagrāma.

183. It gives supreme bliss to devotees.

184. This is the secret of all secrets. What else do you wish to know?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYFIVE

The Greatness of Śālagrāmakṣetra

Earth said:

1. O great Lord, what did sage Sālaṅkāyana do when he was performing penance at Muktikṣetra?

Varāha said:

2. When he was performing penance for a long time, he saw a fine Sāla tree before him.

3. It was of a nature that even the Devas could not get, being broad and big, unbroken anywhere, giving dense shade and bearing beautiful and fragrant flowers.

4. Seeing this wonder, the learned sage Sālaṅkāyana looked at this auspicious tree again and again.

5. Seeing the big tree, the wearied sage took rest under it, all the time desirous of seeing me.

6. He stood on the eastern side of the tree facing west, but under the influence of my māyā he was unable to see me.

7. Then on the Dvādaśī day of the month Vaiśākha he saw me on its eastern side.

8. Seeing me then, the sage in his penance repeatedly prostrated before me and extolled me with the hymns of the Ṛgveda.

9. Struck by my effulgence, he closed his eyes and when he opened them praising me still, I had gone to the southern side of the tree.

10. Giving up his original position, he moved opposite to me and began his praise again.

11. While he was praising me still with Ṛgvedic hymns, I moved to the western side.

12. He too then moved to the west and extolled me with the mantras of the Yajurveda.

13. While he was doing so, I moved to the northern side. He also moved and praised me with the mantras of *Sāmaveda*.

14. Pleased by his praise in this manner I told him:

15. O blessed Brahmin, sage Sālaṅkāyana, I am very much pleased by your penance and praise.

16. Seek of me a boon as your penance has fructified.

17. Thus told by me, Sālaṅkāyana stood close to the tree and spoke to me with a tranquil mind:

18. O Lord Hari, I performed this penance only by way of worshipping you, and I was wandering over the whole earth for this.

19. Now I have seen you, O great Lord. If you are pleased with me, then that very fact is fully gratifying to me.

20. And if you wish to give me a boon because of my worship, give me a son like Lord Śiva.

21. This is the boon you may be pleased to give me.

22. Such was the boon asked by that great Brahmin who was performing long penance for the sake of getting a son.

23. So hearing his words, I spoke to him in reply.

24. The aim of your long penance, you have achieved now.

25. Śiva in his form as Nandikeśvara is now born as your son from the right side of your body.

26. O sage, conclude your penance now and be happy in mind.

27. It is a long time since this has occurred, but you have not known the Nandikeśvara born.

28. By the power of Māyā, he was with me amidst the cows. He is now here with your disciple Āmuṣyāyaṇa brought from Mathurā.

29. O great repository of penance, be happy in the hermitage there with your son in my kṣetra and become my equal.

30. O Śālaṅkāyana, listen to another secret which I now tell you. Because of my being pleased with you, know this place comes to be known as Śālagrāma.

31. The tree seen by you is none other than myself. This is not known to any one other than Maheśvara.

32. Because of Māyā I am not easily known. But I showed myself, being pleased with you.

33. Thus giving the boon to Śālaṅkāyana, I disappeared there as he was looking on.

34. After circumambulating the tree, the sage went to his hermitage.

35. The place Śālagrāma which liberates devotees from the bonds of *Saṁsāra*, is very dear to me.

36. O Earth, listen to secrets about this I am now telling you. They help people to cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

37. There are fourteen tīrthas there, which are not known to all.

38. There is the place called Bilvaprabha where there are four ponds within the distance of a krośa. It is very pleasing and beneficial to devotees.

39. The man who bathes there after fasting for one day and night, gets the merit of performing four Aśvamedha sacrifices.

40. And he who gives up life there, standing in my devotion, enjoys the fruit of Aśvamedha and goes to my world.

41. Another is known as Cakrasvāmī, where you get scattered many stones marked by cakras.

42. It extends over a length of three yojanas.

43. The man who bathes there after fasting for three nights, certainly gets the merit of three sacrifices.

44. And he who gives up life there with devotion to me, enjoys the fruit of Vājapeya sacrifice and goes to my world.

45. Then there is Viṣṇupada where three torrents of water fall from the peak of Himālayas.

46. The man who bathes there after fasting for three nights, gets the fruit of three Rātri Sacrifices.

47. And he who gives up life there free from all attachments, enjoys the fruit of Atirātra sacrifice and remains high in my world.

48. There is the place called Kālīhrada, where there is a pond and a stream arising from the Badari tree.

49. He who bathes there foregoing six meals, attains the fruit of Naramedha sacrifice.

50. And he who gives up life there free from all attachments, enjoys the fruit of Naramedha and delights in my world.

51-52. There is another important and wonderful place called Śaṅkhaprabha, where on Dvādaśī day the sound of conch is heard at midnight.

53. Then there is Gadākuṇḍa where the water on the southern side always vibrates.

54. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights, attains the same merit as is attained by the Brahmins who master Vedānta.

55. And he who gives up life there with full gratification, goes to my world with a big body and holding the mace in the hand.

56. There is the place called Agniprabha where a single torrent falls on the north-east.

57. He who bathes there after fasting for four nights, attains merit five times that of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

58. And he who gives up life there remaining in my devotion, enjoys the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and reaches my world.

59. A wonder here is that the water here feels hot in winter and cold in summer.

60. There is Sarvāyudha where seven torrents fall from Himavān.

61. He who bathes there after fasting for seven nights becomes a king with all weapons and arts.

62. And he who gives up life there remaining steady in my service, enjoys all royal pleasures and reaches my world.

63. There is Devaprabha where the water from the hill falls in five directions.

64. He who bathes there after foregoing eight meals, gets mastery of the four Vedas.

65. And he who gives up life there giving up all desires, gives up the result of Vedic actions too and remains high in my world.

66. Then there is Vidyādhara where also five torrents fall from the Himālayas.

67. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, goes to the world of Vidyādharas and becomes happy there.

68. And he who gives up life there free from all attachments, enjoys all pleasures in the world of Vidyādharas and goes to my world.

69. There is Puṇyanadī full of stones and bowers and resorted to by Gandharvas and Apsarases.

70. He who bathes there after fasting for eight days, moves at will in all the seven islands.

71. And he who gives up life there remaining in my devotion, gives up seven islands and reaches my world.

72. There is Gandharva where a single torrent falls on the western side.

73. He who bathes there after fasting for four days, delights himself with the devotees guarding quarters going freely wherever he likes.

74. And he who gives up life there remaining in my devotion, gives up the (company of) guardian deities and goes to my world.

75. O Earth, there is the place called Devahrada where the sacrifice of Bali was destroyed.

76. The pond here is cool and charming and deep and pleasant even for the gods.

77. In that pond, the fish have marks of the cakra and they move about here and there.

78. I shall tell you about another wonder that occurs there.

79-80. Thirtysix golden lotuses appear there at sunrise and these can be seen till noon.

81. He who bathes there after fasting for ten nights, attains the fruit of ten Aśvamedha sacrifices.

82. And he who gives up life there thinking of me, enjoys the fruit of Aśvamedha and then becomes my equal.

83. I shall now tell you about another place called Samastasukhavallabha at the confluence of two divine rivers.

84. Coming down from the celestial regions, the gods with their consorts remain in it, as also Gandharvas, Apsarases, Nāgas and Uragas.

85. So too the sages, seers, Siddhas and Kinnaras.

86-87. This abode of Śiva called Samastasukhavallabha in Nepal is more important than all other places of Śiva.

88. Here, along with Śvetagaṅgā that arose from the matted tresses of Śiva, mingle numerous other rivers visible and invisible.

89. And also Gaṇḍakī and Kṛṣṇā that arose from the body of Kṛṣṇa which mingle with the river Triśūlagaṅgā.

90. Such are the confluences of rivers in this place.

91. O Earth, know you that in that Kṣetra of mine there is a very holy place which is not easily accessible even to Devas.

92. That is Siddhāśrama, the most superior penance-grove of Śiva.

93. It is full of flowering and fruit-bearing trees like plantain, Nicula, Punnāga, Kesara,

94. Kharjūra, Aśoka, Bakula, Priyāla, Coconut, arecanut, Campaka and Jambu,

95. Lime, Pomegranate, Badarī, Ketakī, many varieties of Jasmine, Kurabaka and others.

96. Numerous couples of celestials play at the confluence there.

97. The man who bathes there gets the fruit of a hundred Aśvamedhas.

98. Bathing there in the month of Vaiśākha confers the result of (the gift of) a thousand cows, and the same in the month of Māgha confers the same result as of bathing in Prayāga.

99. He who bathes there according to rules in the month of Kārttika when the sun is in Tulā, doubtless attains salvation.

100. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights, attains the fruit of Rājasūya sacrifice and delights in heaven like the gods.

101. Sacrifices, penance, gift, śrāddha, worship of the favourite deity, whichever is done here, produces endless benefits.

102. I forgive also whatever offence committed in the course of these.

103. Just as it is rare for man to get at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, so too the confluence of divine rivers here. This is the secret of this Kṣetra of mine.

104. In this great place Śālagrāma, I stand facing east, dear to the devotees.

105. I shall tell you another thing, O Earth, an inner secret which people under the influence of Māyā do not know.

106. That is that the great Śiva remains calm on my right side.

107. Those who know this Śiva really know me and those who know me really know Śiva too.

108. Where I am, Śiva too is there, and where Śiva is, I too am there. There is no difference between us.

109. He who worships Śiva, indeed worships me and h e who knows this, attains immense good.

110. Such is this great place where both Viṣṇu and Śiva make their presence. People who die here attain salvation.

111. First Muktikṣetra, then Rurukhaṇḍa, then the confluence of divine rivers and afterwards Triveṇī.

112. The place where Gaṇḍakī flows is very holy, because Gaṇḍakī is the best of all rivers.

113. Then is the Harikṣetra where Gaṅgā mingles with Bhāgīrathī.

114. The sacredness of the place where Gaṇḍakī joins Gaṅgā cannot be fully known even by the gods.

115. I have thus told you, O fair goddess, about the greatness of Śālagrāma and of Gaṇḍakī which removes all sins, what you asked of me earlier and what is dear to all devotees.

116. This is the most important of all narratives, most brilliant among the brilliant, the foremost of merits and the best of penances.

117. This is the secret of all secrets and the best of all paths and the greatest of gains.

118. This should not be imparted to the wicked, the obstinate, the disobedient, the sinful, the ungrateful and the offenders of Brahmins.

119. This should not be imparted to a bad disciple, to one who condemns the scriptures, to the base or to one who does not know divine service.

120. It should be imparted to the disciple who is good and intellectually bright, free from greed and desirous of acquiring merit.

121. He who recites this, rising up early in the morning, liberates twentyone generations in his family.

122. And after death, he reaches my world.

123. I have thus told you about the greatness of Śālagrāmakṣetra. What else do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYSIX

Greatness of Rurukṣetra and Hṛṣikeśa

Sūta said:

1. On hearing about the greatness of Śālagrāma, Earth became wonderstruck and asked again.

Earth said:

2. How wonderful is the place about which you spoke to me ! I feel very much gratified to hear this.

3. You have said about a very sacred place called Ruruṣaṇḍa. Who was this Ruru and how could be that, O Hṛṣikeśa you have chosen to remain there ?

4. Please tell me this if you consider me deserving of this favour.

Varāha said:

5. Once there lived a Brahmin by name Devadatta, a descendent of Bhṛgu, well versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

6. He was an expert in matters relating to sacrifice, highly ascetic, and fond of guests.

7. His penance-grove was full of sacred trees and creepers, was abundant in roots and fruits, and had herds of gentle beasts.

8. He performed penance there for a thousand years.

9. This made Indra restless in mind. He called the Gandharvas together with their associates and also the season spring and spoke to them in sweet words.

10. I badly need your help to overcome a serious trouble. Let me get peace of mind through you.

11. Then Kāmadeva and the Malaya wind replied to the lord of gods.

12. Command us as to what we may do for your pleasure. Which ascetic's mind, despite his control of senses, should we disturb ? Which man should we pull down from his severe penance ? Tell us quick.

13. Thus asked, Indra was pleased and he replied.

14. I was much worried till I saw you. I shall tell you everything in detail.

15. A sage named Devadatta is performing severe penance in the beautiful Hṛṣīkeśa in the Himālayas.

16. His aim is to attain my position. See that his penance is disturbed.

17. Receiving this command of Indra, Kāmadeva started with the spring season and the Malaya wind.

18. Then Indra called the celestial damsel named Pramlocā and spoke to her in endearing words.

19. I wish you success in what you do. Go to the hermitage of sage Devadatta and captivate him by your charm.

20. Accomplish this so well as to gain my special favour.

21. Taking this command of Indra, she went to the hermitage of Devadatta.

22. She stood there in the nearby grove which was beautiful with a variety of trees and creepers, sweet with the warblings of joyful cuckoos;

23. Delightful with the humming of swarms of bees that enjoy honey in the blossoms of the Rasāla trees;

24. With the music of Gandharvas spreading around and the Malaya wind blowing cool; with lotuses in bloom in the clear ponds;

25. With calm prevailing everywhere due to the prowess of the sage; captivating with the sweet odour spreading in every place;

26. And she began to sing there so well that the sage became attracted and he slowly stopped his penance.

27-28. The Gandharvas also began their music, and, seizing the occasion, Kāmadeva strung his flowery bow and aimed his arrows at the tranquil sage.

29. Hearing that music beautiful with the Pañcama svara the mind of the sage became perturbed.

30. Kāmadeva tirelessly shot his arrows again on him.

31. The sage, with perturbed mind, moved about all around and saw at a distance beautiful damsel playing with a ball.

32. Hit by the arrows of Kāmadeva, the great sage approched her with a smile.

33. She too looked at him amorously but with shyness.

34. Attracting the mind of the sage with her irresistible charms, she continued to play the ball unmindful of flowers falling from her dishevelling hair.

35. At that time the Malaya wind blew off her garment freeing it from its knot and the girdle holding it.

36. Kāmadeva lost no time in hitting him again. And the excited sage went close to her and said:

37. Who are you and whose, O lovely lady. What do you seek in this forest?

38. Do you wish to make people like me beasts to be drawn by your hands; and, catching us in this way, what do you propose to do?

39. Anyway, we are entirely under your control and we will do whatever you make us do.

40. Then he held that smiling damsel by the right hand. He embraced her and gave her delight.

41. Day and night he enjoyed with her every pleasure helped by the power he had acquired by his penance.

42. A long time elapsed like this. One day suddenly, as if waking from sleep, discrimination dawned upon him.

43. He felt aversion for everything and exclaimed with remorse.

44. How powerful is Māyā that deluded me in this way, that my dislodgement from penance was effected in spite of my awareness of it.

45. The saying that woman is like a pit of fire and man is

like a pot of ghee, is not of the wise because there is much difference when we think about it.

46. The ghee in the pot melts only in contact with the fire, but man melts at the very sight of woman, deluded by her.

47. So saying, he gave up the celestial lady, Pramlocā, and began to think.

48. There has been a great impediment to my penance here. So I shall leave this hermitage and go somewhere else where I can perform severe penance and emaciate my body.

49. So deciding in his mind, he went towards the hermitage of Bhṛgu.

50. He bathed at the confluence of the river Gaṇḍakī, performed ablutions there for the manes and gods, worshipped Viṣṇu and Śiva and then thought of the proper locality for penance.

51. Seeing the hermitage of Bhṛgu towards the north, he moved there on the eastern bank of Gaṇḍakī.

52. Resting for a while, he looked for a fit place there for penance.

53. He chose the spot known as Bhṛgutuṅga and engaged himself in meditating on Śiva.

54. After a long period Śiva became pleased and appeared before him in the form of a liṅga with water flowing from it at the bottom, top and the sides to give him peace.

55. He told the sage, "O sage, see me Śiva. Know me to be Viṣṇu too. Don't feel that there is any difference between us.

56. Formerly you took us to be different from each other. Therefore it was that impediment occurred to your penance and you were dislodged from it.

57. You will attain your aim if you look at us both with the same attitude.

58. This place where liṅgas have arisen due to the power of penance, will be known as Śubhāṅga.

59. He who bathes in the Gaṇḍakī tīrtha and worships these liṅgas, will attain the fruit of yoga. So saying Śiva disappeared.

60. The sage Devadatta obtaining supreme knowledge by the means suggested by Śiva, gained supreme beatitude.

61. Pramlocā, who became pregnant through the sage, gave birth to a daughter near the hermitage, but leaving the child

there, returned to heaven, considering herself as having taken a new birth.

62. The girl was brought up by the animals called Rurus. She, therefore, came to be known as Ruru and remained in her father's hermitage.

63. Although her hand was sought by many young men (when she came of age), she did not encourage any one.

64. She then resolved to perform penance meditating on lord Viṣṇu.

65. In the first month she took fruit on alternate days, in the second month once in three days.

66. In the third month once in five days and in the fourth once in seven. In the fifth month she took food once in nine days and in the sixth once in fifteen days.

67. In the seventh month she lived on fallen leaves and in the eighth on air alone.

68. A period of one hundred years was thus spent in meditating on Viṣṇu, and she became motionless like a stone.

69. She did not distinguish between opposites and attained the supreme stage of penance which gave a halo to her.

70. Seeing everything illumined by her halo, I was wonderstruck, O Earth, and I appeared before her.

71. But as she had withdrawn all her sense-organs, she did not see me.

72. Then I entered her sense-organs and stood before her heart. She saw me then.

73. Since I made myself visible thus by subduing the senses (*Hṛṣīkās*), I came to be known as Hṛṣīkeśa, and I continued to be there.

74. Soon after that, she could not see me. Then she opened her eyes and saw me standing before her. She then prostrated at my feet, with her whole body in horripilation, and was sobbing.

75. Seeing her in that condition, I spoke.

76. "O beautiful girl, I am pleased with your penance. Seek of me what you have in your mind. I shall grant you that even if it is one not normally granted to others."

77. Hearing these words of the lord, she bowed to him and said with folded hands.

78. "O great lord, if you are pleased to give me a boon, then let it be that you remain in this place in this very form."

79. (I then said): "Let it be so. I shall remain here. But seek another boon also, as I am pleased with you."

80. So asked, she prostrated at my feet again and said:

81. "If you are so pleased, O Lord, then make me holy and give this place my name".

82. Then, O Earth, I spoke to her again:

"Your body will become the holiest of all tīrthas.

83. This place also will be known by your name. He who takes bath in that tīrtha after fasting for three nights, will see me and become purified.

84. Even sins like killing the Brahmin, committed knowingly or unknowingly, will be removed immediately."

85. After giving her these boons, I again became invisible.

86. In due course, she became the tīrtha.

87. Thus have I told you about the greatness and secret of Rurukṣetra.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYSEVEN

Greatness of Goniṣkramaṇa

Earth said:

1. I have now known about the wonder of the Rurukṣetra and the greatness of Hṛṣīkeśa.

2. I now wish to know if there is any other place equally important.

Varāha said:

3. Now know about another place which is equally important at the top of the Himālayas.

4. It is called Goniṣkramaṇa, since a number of cows were released from there.

5. The Prajāpati Aurva performed penance there for seventy kalpas aided by my power of Māyā.

6. A long time elapsed for him in this way.

7. Then a doubt arose in the minds of the people as to why

he was doing penance since no boon was sought by him and no indication of his aim was available.

8. But he was performing penance unabated for quite a long time.

9. Then in that famous tīrtha known as Goniṣkramaṇa, lord Śiva came near him.

10. Aurva was then going to the river Gaṅgā to gather lotus flowers.

11. Knowing him thus out of the hermitage, Śiva entered it.

12. It was auspicious, beautiful and full of fruits and flowers.

13. But it was soon reduced to ashes by the heat of the halo of Śiva.

14. After burning that hermitage, Śiva quickly returned to (his abode in) the Himālayas.

15. Soon Aurva returned to his hermitage with the flower basket. He was calm, collected, patient and wedded to truth.

16. Still, when he saw his hermitage with its abundance of fruits and flowers burnt, anger set foot on his mind, and also sorrow.

17. He then said, his eyes red with anger. "He who burnt this hermitage full of fruits and flowers and water, shall also be afflicted with sorrow and wander about in all the worlds."

18. When this curse was pronounced by Aurva, the whole world began to fear.

19. From that moment Śiva, although he is the lord of the world, began to be tormented by great heat, and he told Pārvatī:

20. "Seeing the penance of Aurva, the gods were afraid and they told me: 'The heat of the penance of this Aurva affects the whole world.

21. But he does not desire anything. How can we remedy this ?"

22. When told thus, I cast my eye on his hermitage. In a moment it was burnt down, and we returned.

23. Being sorry and angry at this, Aurva cursed me, and that has resulted in this torment of mine."

24. Śiva wandered and wandered but could not free himself from the affliction. I too began to feel the torment of heat because of my identity with Śiva but I was unable to do anything.

25. Pārvatī then suggested: "We shall go to lord Nārāyaṇa and seek a solution for this."

26. They then went to Nārāyaṇa, and along with him to Aurva, and told him:

27. "Please withdraw the curse pronounced on Śiva. We are all tormented by it."

28. Aurva said: "What I uttered shall never be false. Let Śiva bring herds of cows and bathe them here. He will then be free from the curse, not otherwise."

29. At that time, I got down there seventyseven auspicious cows.

30. They were all bathed there and they became delighted as a result.

31. Such is the extremely holy tīrtha called Goniṣkramaṇa.

32. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, delights himself in Goloka (in heaven).

33. And he who dies there after performing all austerities, reaches my world and becomes endowed with conch and disc.

34. At the foot of the banyan tree called Pañcavaṭa there, fall five streams of water. He who bathes there after fasting for five nights, attains the fruit of five sacrifices (*Pañcayajñas*).

35. And he who gives up his life there after performing all austerities, enjoys the fruit of five sacrifices and then reaches my world.

36. There is the spot called Pañcapada there, where on my eastern side there are five big slabs.

37. Two of these form Brahmapada. Between them is a broad slab. Above it is the Viṣṇupada, which is mine.

38. He who bathes there after fasting for five nights, reaches those pure worlds dear to the devotees.

39. And he who gives up his life there, becomes free from all bondages, and reaches my world.

40. Then there is the place called Brahmapada where a single torrent falls on the western side.

41. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, reaches Brahmaloka and delights himself in the company of Brahmā.

42. If he does this on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Kaumuda, he attains the fruit of Vājapeya sacrifice.

43. And he who gives up life there remaining steadfast in my service, reaches my world after enjoying the fruit of Vājapeya sacrifice.

44. At a distance of five krośas from there on the north-western side is the place called Koṭivaṭa.

45. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals, gets the fruits of crores of sacrifices.

46. And he who gives up life in this Koṭivaṭa, reaches my place after enjoying the fruit of crores of sacrifices.

47. At a distance of five krośas on the north-east side there is Viṣṇusaras.

48. This lake is mine and it spreads for five krośas along a mountain.

49-50. He who walks there or circumambulates after fasting for three nights and performing all austerities, remains high in Brahmaloka for as many thousands of years as the number of steps he has trodden.

51. And he who gives up life there, after performing his duties well, leaves Brahmaloka and reaches my world.

52. Know you, O beautiful goddess, the wonder in this (Goniṣkramaṇa)kṣetra. A devotee of mine hears there the bellowing sound of the cows.

53. This will be heard very loud on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha.

54. The devotee who performs pious deeds in Goniṣkramaṇa gets freed from all his sins.

55. In this manner was the effect of the curse got over by Śiva along with the gods.

56. I have thus told you in full about Gosthala which removes all ills.

57. This chapter bestows all auspiciousness on my devotees and it adds to my pleasure.

58. This is highly important, highly auspicious, highly beneficial and h'ghly righteous.

59. Those of my devotees who read it, acquire effulgence, wealth and prosperity and attain their desires.

60. They remain esteemed in my world for as many thousands of years as there are syllables in this chapter.

61. Those who read it every day never face a fall. They

liberate seven generations of their ancestors and twentyone generations in his family.

62. This should not be imparted to the wicked, the foolish or the obstinate. It may be imparted to the son, the disciple and he who knows my service.

63. This should not be forgotten at the time of death by any one desirous of supreme bliss. A verse or even a foot of a verse may serve the purpose.

64. In that place which extends over five yojanas, I remain with pleasure on the eastern side.

65. Gaṅgā flows on the west for the sake of those who have no desire.

66. Such is the place where all actions generate well-being.

67. I have thus told you the great secret of this place about which you asked me.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYEIGHT

Greatness of Stutasvāmī

Sūta said:

1. Earth was very much wonder-struck on hearing the narration about Goniṣkramaṇa.

Earth said:

2. I am very much gratified to hear about the greatness of cows and the greatness of yourself, O Lord.

3. O Lord Nārāyaṇa, now tell me if there is any place even holier than this.

Varāha said :

4. I am lord Nārāyaṇa, the resort of all *dharma*. There is none to rival me and so I am the supreme lord.

5. I tell this śāstra to you in pleasure, assuming the form of the boar which is dear to all devotees.

Earth said :

6. "As you tell me more and more about *dharma* and its cause, I get more and more unbounded joy in my mind."

7. Hearing these words of Earth, the lord, who is the highest in *dharma*, and who had taken the form of the boar, told her.

Varāha said :

8. It is befitting of you to say this as you are devoted to me. I shall tell you what you ask for the happiness of the world.

9. There is my holy place called Stutasvāmi. My presence is there from the Dvāparayuga.

10. I will be born as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī to kill all demons.

11. I will have five disciples then who will be experts in *dharma* due to my favour. They will be establishing me as the embodiment of *dharma*.

12. These followers of mine will be Śāṇḍilya, Jājali, Kapila, Upasāyaka and Bhṛgu.

13. There will also be those of pure mind setting examples to others by themselves,

14. And upholding me by their power of knowledge, namely Saṅkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

15. They will be devoted to me and propagate righteousness.

16. I will give them whatever boons they wish and they will speak to me in their knowledge of self.

17. Where dharma is firm, may there the science of self-knowledge become established. Let this be well known and let this never be false. May the world go on with your favour.

18. I will then be telling them : O dear disciples, let it be as you please, as you are dear to me.

19. What a good disciple desires will certainly be granted.

20. Then they will tell me dear to all desciples:

21. Just like butter churned out of curds, is the Varāha churned out of all śāstras. It is the cream of all knowledge.

22. They will thus proclaim as authoritative what I say and will attain supreme beatitude.

23. This is considered by the devotees as the greatest of all Śāstras leading to salvation of all.

24. Listen, O Earth, I shall tell you another thing, namely about the actions to be done.

25. Some people cross this world by knowledge while others engage themselves in actions for the same. Others do this by gifts.

26. Others resort to both knowledge and action, certain others realise me by the power of yoga and yet others by rituals.

27. But all follow *dharma* and do everything with concentration of mind.

28. This is the great śāstra for liberation from *saṁsāra* propounded for the sake of my devotees.

29. They will propagate this, each according to what appeals to him most and as the sages have demonstrated.

30. Those learned in śāstras along with their disciples will popularise what is suited for the particular yuga. And by my grace, they will all attain bliss.

31. Those among my disciples who have the fault of rivalry and those who find fault with my śāstra, will have rebirth.

32. For those who are caught in rivalry is not the world that is great beyond.

33. Listen, O Earth, I shall tell you another thing in regard to those that follow my path.

34. Even those who are learned, humble and free from many faults, come down if they have this fault of rivalry.

35. Rivalry destroys *dharma*, it destroys everything. He who has rivalry can never see me.

36-37. There may be those who do numerous good deeds, give gifts, learn Vedas, practice penance, attain knowledge and perform daily rituals. But if they have rivalry they do not see me, but are defiled by Māyā.

38. So none should have rivalry which destroys *dharma,* if salvation is wished for through what I have laid down.

39. Even wise people do not know about this, and many have brought ruin upon themselves by rivalry.

40. I have proclaimed this śāstra dear to all devotees in this boar form of mine.

41. Listen now to the wonder that happened at Bhūtagiri where there is an iron idol of mine.

42. Some consider it as of iron, others as of bronze, still others as of stone, yet others as of diamond,

43. Although they perform worship to me at the top or bottom and touch me in the middle of the head.

44-45. Those who have preceptors and worship me in Maṇipūragiri, derive virtues of the preceptors, get freed of all sins and attain beatitude.

46. In that place, on its north, is the tīrtha called Pañcadruma.

47. He who bathes there after foregoing food five times, delights in the Nandana garden with the Apsarā women.

48. And he who gives up life there fully gratified, gives up Nandana and reaches my world.

49. At a distance of half a yojana on the southern side is the tīrtha known as Bhṛgukuṇḍa.

50. My devotee who takes bath there subdues his senses and is never born again on earth.

51. He delights himself with the Apsarases in the peak of Meru where Dhruva remains.

52. And he who gives up life there, remaining in my service, gives up the world of Dhruva and reaches my world.

53. There is another spot called Maṇikuṇḍa where gems are seen in several places.

54. This is a deep pond and not easily accessible even to Devas.

55. He who bathes there after fasting five times, comes to possess gems and gets the marks of a king.

56. And he who gives up life there, remaining in my service, cuts asunder the bonds of *saṁsāra*.

57. There is Suguhya on the eastern side at a distance of three krośas. He who bathes there reaches my world.

58. Then there is Dhūtapāpa at a distance of five krośas on the Western side.

59. That is particularly dear to me and I have made it full of emeralds and glowing like gold.

60. He who bathes there after foregoing five meals,

61. Giving up all actions pertaining to the five elements, gets freed of all sins,

62. Reaches the world of Indra, O fair goddess, and delights himself there with Devas.

63. And he who gives up life there, remaining in my service, gives up the world of Indra and reaches my world.

64-65. Know you now about the wonder there. In that Maṇipūra hill the streak of water will not fall on the person who

approaches it unless he is cleansed of all sins. When once the sins are removed, the streak begins to fall.

66. Similarly, there is an Aśvattha (Peepal) tree near which only a pure person is able to go and not one who is sinful.

67. On the western side, at a distance of half a yojana is an Āmalaka (Gooseberry) tree.

68. By my prowess it yields all desires, but this cannot be known by a sinful man.

69. The devotee who, with full control of the senses and concentration of mind, and fasting for three nights,

70. Goes there at sunrise and at noon or at sunset,

71. With undivided attention and full determination, and procures the Āmalaka fruit, gets (his desires fulfilled) in the course of five days in that Bhūtagiri.

72. Hearing these words of lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth asked again in all humility.

73-74. "Be pleased to tell me about Stutasvāmi, the holy spots there and how it got this name".

Varāha said:

75. O Earth, after killing the enemies of gods and cutting all bonds of *saṁsāra*, when I was remaining at Maṇipūra in Dvāparayuga,

76. Brahmā and other gods began to praise me with mantras.

77-78. Then, O goddess, Nārada, Asita, Devala and Parvata who were all deep in my devotion, gave me the name in the Maṇipūra hill as 'Stutasvāmī' (and then the place also got the name).

79. I have thus told you how and why the place got this name, what you asked for the good of the devotees.

80. I have told you about the greatness of Stutagiri where I will be from the beginning of the Dvāparayuga.

81. All these secrets about Bhūtagiri should be listened to by people with attention.

82. Thus have I told you about the greatness of Stuatasvāmi, What else do you wish to ask ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FORTYNINE

Greatness of Dvārakā

Sūta said :

1. Earth was very much pleased to hear the greatness of Stutasvāmi. She then said:

Earth said :

2. I have gained great tranquility of mind on listening to the account of importance (of Stutasvāmi).

3. This great śāstra has been imparted by the lord himself who bears the earth, kills the enemies of gods and holds bow and arrows, sword, conch, disc, mace and lotus.

4. Thus have I been told about the greatness of Sutasvāmi. If there is anything still greater, be pleased to tell me that.

Varāha said :

5. O you goddess wearing garland of lotus flowers, I shall tell you another secret aimed at removing sins.

6. In Dvāpara yuga my father will be born with the name Śauri in the Yādava clan.

7. There is a well-known city named Dvārakā there, built by Viśvakarmā and beautiful like the city of gods.

8. It is ten yojanas long and five yojanas broad. I will live there for five hundred years.

9. After removing the causes of trouble to Devas, I will return to the world of gods.

10. A sage by name Durvāsas with high spiritual powers, will curse my race.

11. As a result, the residents of Dvārakā, namely the Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Bhojas will all die.

12. Balabhadra, white like the moon and wearing the Vanamālā garland, will drag the city with his plough into the sea.

13. Hearing these words of Lord Nārāyaṇa, Earth desirous of *dharma*, held his feet and said:

Earth said :

14. You are the lord of the worlds and the custodian of Māyā. Tell me how Durvāsas can give such a curse.

Varāha said:

15. I will then get a wife called Jāmbavatī, beautiful and youthful.

16. A son by name Sāmba will be born to her who will be liked by me but who will be haughty because of his beauty and youth.

17. He will dress himself like a pregnant woman and ask the sage whether the child to be born will be a son, as such is the desire.

18. Knowing that he is really Sāmba, the sage will become very angry and say:

19. "From your pregnancy what will be born is a club which will eventually kill all Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas."

20. Hearing the words of curse uttered by Durvāsas, all the boys would be sorry. They would rush to me in fear.

21. I will then ask them why they have come and they will tell me what had happened.

22. I will tell them then that what Durvāsas said would certainly take place.

23. I have thus told you about the cause of the curse on the Vṛṣṇis and others. I shall tell you now about the holy places there.

24. In Dvārakā which gives delight to the Vaiṣṇavas, there is the great place called Pañcasara which is a little within the shore.

25. He who bathes there foregoing six meals, delights himself with the Apsarases in heaven.

26. And he who gives up life there, leaves the world of gods and remains high in my world.

27. In that place there is a big Plakṣa tree with numerous branches with a lot of good fruits shaped like pots.

28. Many people go there to get these fruits but none gets them other than my devotees.

29. Those who get the fruits become free from all sins and they attain beatitude remaining in my service.

30. There is the tīrtha called Prabhāsa which people with desire or greed are unable to see.

31. He who bathes there after foregoing five meals, delights himself in the seven islands and gets access to secret places there.

32. And he who gives up life there free from sins, gives up all attachment and reaches my world.

33. Know you now about the wonder there.

34. In the sea in Prabhāsa many big fish are seen moving about here and there.

35. They do not harm any one bathing there.

36. If Piṇḍas (balls of rice for the manes) are put there, they draw them towards them without themselves going near.

37. But they receive the piṇḍas of only those who are righteous and not of those who are sinful.

38. There is the tīrtha called Pañcapiṇḍa which is deep and spreads over one krośa.

39. He who bathes there after foregoing five meals, delights himself in the world of Indra.

40. And he who gives up life in this Pañcakuṇḍa[1], gives up the world of Indra and goes to my world.

41. Know you about the wonder there which can be seen only by the virtuous and not by the sinful.

42. At noon on the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day in the year, a golden lotus appears there.

43. There is the place called Saṅgamana where, in the Maṇipūra hill, four streaks of water fall.

44. He who bathes there after foregoing four meals, goes to the world of Vaikhānasas.

45. And he who gives up life there in full devotion gives up the world of Vaikhānasas and goes to my world.

46. Listen to the wonder that is there in the Maṇipūra hill. The streaks fall only before persons free from sin and not before others.

47. There is then Haṁsakuṇḍa where a single torrent falls from the Maṇipūra hill.

48. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals, becomes free from all attachments and delights himself in the world of Varuṇa.

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1. Pañcapiṇḍa and Pañcakuṇḍa seem to be two different names for the same tīrtha.

49. And he who gives up life there, leaves the world of Varuṇa and becomes exalted in my world.

50. I shall tell you about the wonder in Haṁsakuṇḍa which is seen only by the pure persons and not by others.

51. On the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day in the year, at noon swans are seen there white like the moon.

52. Those who see these swans moving here and there, attain supreme bliss.

53. Then there is Kadamba where the Vṛṣṇis became purified and reached my world.

54. He who bathes there after foregoing four meals, delights himself in the world of sages.

55. And he who gives up life there, after performing all austerities, gives up the world of sages and reaches my world.

56. I shall tell you about the wonder there. There is a waterfall on its eastern side.

57. On the Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha, flowers can be seen in it when the sun rises.

58. Those of my devotees who get these flowers attain supreme bliss.

59. There is Cakratīrtha where five streaks of water fall from Maṇipūra.

60. He who bathes there after foregoing five meals, delights in Svargaloka for ten thousand years.

61. And he who gives up life there, free from desire and delusion, gives up everything in Svarga and reaches my world.

62. I shall tell you about the wonder there which is known by none other than my devotees.

63. At midnight on the twentyfourth Dvādaśī in the year, a sound which is pleasant to the mind and ear is heard.

64. The wind wafts fragrance but this is perceptible only to the virtuous and not to others.

65. On its northern side there is a big Aśoka tree. It blossoms when the sun rises.

66. Those of my devotees who get this flower, attain supreme bliss.

67. There is the Raivataka (mount) in that place, which is known all over the world and where I had played.

68. It is full of thickets and bowers and abundant with flowers.

69. It has rows of slabs of variegated colours and caves everywhere and many lakes liked by even gods.

70. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals, goes to the world of Soma fully gratified.

71. And he who gives up life there remaining steadfast in my service, gives up the world of Soma and reaches my world.

72. Listen to the wonder there which people seeking *dharma* notice.

73. In the water numerous leaves from the trees standing around fall, but none can be seen within it and the water remains absolutely clear.

74. On the eastern side there is a gigantic tree and another by my side, spreading over an area of five krośas.

75. The water is full of lotuses, lilies and other fragrant flowers.

76. It has fish of various kinds. There are rocks in it with caves.

77. He who bathes there after foregoing eight meals, delights himself in the divine Nandana garden with the Apsarases.

78. Listen to the wonder there which, of course, is seen only by the seekers of *dharma.*

79. As in the sea, the water here rises at noon and falls at midnight.

80. On its western side is a big Bilva tree which flowers on the twentyfourth Dvādaśi day of the year.

81. This is seen by the virtuous when the sun sets, but not by others.

82. My devotees who get this flower attain, doubtless, supreme bliss.

83. In that place there is the spot known as Viṣṇusaṅkramaṇa where I was hit by the hunter and then attained my original form.

84. There is a small deep pond here by the side of Maṇipūra. A streak of water also falls here.

85. (He who bathes there) without any feeling of loss or gain, (goes to the world of the sun, and he who gives up life there) leaves the world of the sun and reaches my world.

86. I shall tell you about the wonder there, namely that Viṣṇu is easily visible there to the meritorious but not to others.

87. On its southern side is a big and beautiful Aśvattha tree which bears fruits at noon on the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day of the year.

88. Those of my devotees who get these fruits, get supreme bliss.

89. I remain in that shore facing north for the well-being of my devotees.

90. I am there together with Balarāma and the auspicious Ekādaśī.

91. All the three of us remain there in Dvārakā and the three delight there.

92. The place extends in all over thirty yojanas. Those who go there and see me in all devotion, soon get beatitude.

93. This is the best of all narratives, the best means for peace (of mind).

94. The greatest of all *dharmas*, the most lustrous, the best of all gains, the foremost of all actions,

95. The most sacred of scriptures, the best in penance.

96. This should never be forgotten at the time of death by one desirous of bliss. He then reaches my world.

97. He who recites this early in the morning, liberates seven generations of his ancestors and seven generations of his successors.

98. I have thus told you in detail about the greatness of Dvārakā. What else do you wish to ask?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY

Greatness of Sānandūra

Sūta said :

1. Earth was very happy to listen to the greatness of Dvārakā and spoke to the Lord again, being desirous of knowing *dharma*.

Earth said :

2. "I am extremely delighted that you have been pleased to tell me all this.

3. If you are pleased to favour me further, tell me if there is any place even more important than this."

4. Hearing these words of Earth, Viṣṇu in the form of the boar, spoke to her.

Varāha said:

5. There is the holy place called Sānandūra to the north of sea and the south of Malaya mountain.

6. There I stand facing north in an idol which is neither very tall nor very short.

7. Some consider this idol to be of iron, others to be of copper, some others to be of bronze yet others to be of tin and still others to be of stone. Such is its wonder.

8. Now listen to the holy spots there which help people to cross the ocean of *saṁsāra*.

9. One wonder in Sānandūra is that a golden lotus appears there at noon.

10-11. In the spot called Rāmagṛha there, a big tree with a single creeper spread over it, stands in the sea, but it is not visible to any one (other than my devotees).

12. Another wonder I may tell you, O Earth, which also my devotees alone are able to see.

13-14. There are multitudes of fish there, but if a piṇḍa is thrown amidst them, none touches it until it is received by a big fish with the mark of disc on it.

15. There is the lake called Rāmasaras which is deep and broad and adorned with red lotuses.

16. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, goes to the abode of Budha and makes himself happy there.

17. And he who gives up life there, leaves the abode of Budha and goes to my world.

18. Now listen to the wonder in the Rāmasaras which people other than my devotees do not see.

19. This lake extends over one krośa and has around it numerous bushes and creepers.

20. It is attractive with numerous lotuses in every part of it and also with other water plants. There is amidst them one white lotus which is of silver.

21. On the northern side is the Brahmasaras where falls a single torrent shaped like a mace.

22. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals reaches the world of Brahmā and delights himself there.

23. And he who gives up life in this Brahmasaras, reaches my world being permitted by Brahmā.

24. Know you now the wonder in Brahmasaras which my devotees see.

25. The single torrent (about which I told you) falls on the earth at noon on the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day of the year.

26. Soon after noon, this ceases to fall on earth. Such is the wonder in this holy Brahmasaras.

27. There is the place called Saṅgamana where the sea and Rāma remain together.

28. There we get of a pond placid water with bushes and creepers all around and charming with birds.

29. It is just at a distance of one yojana from the sea and is full of fragrant lotuses and lilies.

30. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals, goes to the abode of (the lord of) sea and from there to my world.

31. I shall tell you about the wonder in that Saṅgama seeing which people move about happily free from all ailments.

32. The leaves falling in the water there are never seen in it.

33. The leaves (in the trees) in Rāmasaṅgama have no holes in them. No hole is seen in them even by my devotees.

34. At a distance of half a yojana in the east is the holy Śakrasaras.

35. Four streaks of clear water fall in the pond there.

36. He who bathes there after foregoing four meals, reaches the worlds of four (principal) guardian deities of the quarters.[1]

37. And he who gives up life there, gives up the worlds of guardian deities and reaches my world.

38. I shall tell you the wonder seen there by the pure devotees.

39. The four streaks fall on the four sides. They never increase or decrease in their flow.

40. And on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, highly pleasant music is heard there.

41. Then there is the place called Sūrpāraka where we get the hermitage of Paraśurāma.

1. These are Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Soma.

42. There I take abode facing north with a Śālmalī (silk-cotton) tree in front on the shore of the sea.

43. He who takes bath there after foregoing food five times, goes to the world of sages and sees Arundhatī there.

44. And he who gives up life there, after performing all austerities, gives up the world of sages and reaches my world.

45. Those who prostrate there in reverence, get the benefit of prostrating for twelve years.

46. The Śālmalī tree is visible only to my devotees and not to those who are sinful;

47. And that too only on the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day in the year.

48. On the north-western side we get the lake called Jaṭā-kuṇḍa.

49. It spreads over ten yojanas and lies to the north of the sea and south of Malaya.

50. He who bathes there after fasting five times, goes to the abode of Agasti and delights himself there.

51. And he who gives up life there thinking of me, leaves the abode of agasti and reaches my world.

52. Nine streams fall into this lake and it is deep like the sea.

53. Know you the wonder there which is seen only by my devotees and not by others.

54. On the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day of the year when the sun rises, the water does not swell but remains steady.

55. I have thus told you about Sānandūra, its expanse and wonders which increase devotion.

56. This is the greatest secret and the holiest of all.

57. He who goes there remaining in the eight-fold path, attains the highest. I assure so.

58. He who reads this every day and he who listens to it, liberate six generations of ancestors and six generations of successors.

59. This should not be forgotten at the time of death, if easy passage to the world of Viṣṇu is desired.

60. I have thus told you what you asked me about for the sake of devotees. What else do you wish to ask ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYONE

Greatness of Lohārgala

Sūta said:

1. After listening to the greatness of Sānandūra, Earth asked Varāha again with folded hands.

Earth said:

2. "By knowing this secret, O lord, I have gained great peace of mind.
3. Are there places even greater than Sānandūra and more important,
4. O Lord of the worlds, best of Men, great hero, lotus-eyed and of the nature of Time."
5. Hearing these sobbing words of Earth, Lord Viṣṇu, the remover of all ills of the world, spoke in sweet tone.

Varāha said:

6. Listen, O goddess, I shall tell you what you ask.
7. My devotee may go to Lohārgala in the Himālaya, at a distance of thirty yojanas from Siddhavaṭa, (although it is) situated amidst (settlements of) Mlecchas.
8. It is fifteen yojanas long and five yojanas broad.
9. (Normally) it is inaccessible and intolerable being surrounded by the heinous (Mlecchas), but it can be reached by the virtuous who follow my path.
10. I stand there in a golden idol facing north.
11. The demons crept in there, but I stopped them with my Vaiṣṇavī māyā.
12. I shielded there Brahmā, Rudra, Skanda, Indra, Maruts, Ādityas, Vasus, Vāyu, Aśvins, Soma, Bṛhaspati and other celestials.
13. And with my effulgent cakra, quickly annihilated thousands of demons.
14. The gods thus became happy.
15. Thus was this place Lohārgala established by me after killing the valiant demons.
16. He who sees me there with all the effort necessary for it, establishes himself as a great devotee.

17-18. He who bathes there after fasting for three nights and performing all austerities, delights himself in thousands of heavens.

19. And he who gives up life there, gives up all these heavens and reaches my world.

20. I shall tell you about a great wonder there.

21. On the twentyfourth Dvādaśī day of the year, an offering is made to me there, which removes all desires.

22. I have installed there a horse, white in colour like the lily, jasmine and conch, and decorated with all kinds of gems.

23. Offerings of bow, arrow, rosary, spouted vessel and seat are made to me over this horse.

24. Climbing the white mountain and falling in the Kuru country, no injury is found sustained.

25. Making numerous forms fall from the sky, the horse remains in the sky calm and composed.

Sūta said:

26. Hearing these words of Earth, the great sage (Sanatkumāra), son of Brahmā became wonderstruck, being influenced by Viṣṇumāyā.

27. And in that state of wonder, he asked again.

Sanatkumāra said:

28. O goddess, you are extremely blessed that you got the sight of the lord of the worlds.

29. Tell me all that he told you in the course of your conversation with him, as that is conducive to the wellbeing of all.

30. My mind is full of eagerness to know the rare things told by the Lord for the sake of *dharma* and supported by reason.

31. What did that lotus-eyed god, fond of all devotees, say regarding the deeds prescribed ?

Sūta said:

32. Hearing these words of the great Sanatkumāra, (Earth) spoke to him in sweet words.

33. O dear son, I shall tell you what the Lord of worlds told me at my request.

Varāha said:

34. The performance there of the prescribed actions properly, removes all sins.

35. The horses of mine lead (such devotees and) those of theirs, but none else.

36. There is another important pond called Pañcasaras, where four white torrents fall in high speed.

37. He who bathes there after foregoing four meals, goes to the (Gandharva) world Caitrāṅgada and delights there in the company of Gandharvas.

38. And he who gives up life in that place, gives up the world of Gandharvas, and reaches my world.

39. Then there is Nāradakuṇḍa where five torrents fall, each like a palm tree.

40. He who bathes there after foregoing one meal, sees the divine sage Nārada and lives with him.

41. And he who gives up life there knowing the secret about me, leaves Nārada and reaches my world.

42. Then there is in that place Vasiṣṭhakuṇḍa where three torrents fall which are neither too big nor too small.

43. He who bathes there after fasting five times, goes to the world of Vasiṣṭha and enjoys there.

44. And he who gives up life there, remaining steadfast in my service, gives up the world of Vasiṣṭha and reaches my world.

45. Then there is the spot called Pañcakuṇḍa where five torrents fall from the Himalayan peak.

46. He who bathes there after fasting five times, goes to the world of Sage Pañcaśikha.

47. And he who gives up life there, after completely conquering the senses, gives it up and attains the highest bliss.

48. Then there is the famous Saptarṣikuṇḍa where seven torrents fall from Himavān.

49. He who bathes there after giving up seven meals, delights in the world of sages surrounded by their daughters.

50. And he who gives up life there, free from all attachment and desire, gives up the (company of) seven sages and reaches my world.

51. There is Śarabhaṅgakuṇḍa where a single torrent falls and flows as the river Śarabhaṅga.

52. He who bathes there after giving up six meals delights in the world (of Śarabhaṅga) in the company of daughters of sages.

53. And he who gives up life there, free from all attachment, leaves Śarabhaṅga and reaches my world.

54. Then there is the pond called Agnisaras where the water falling on the ground remains still.

55. He who bathes there after fasting eight times, reaches the world of Agnisaras[1] and derives great pleasure.

56. And he who gives up life there, remaining in my service, gives up the world of Agni and reaches my world.

57. Then there is the pond of Bṛhaspati full of waters of the Vedas, where a single torrent falls from the Himalayan peak.

58. He who bathes there after fasting six times, goes to the world of Bṛhaspati surrounded by the daughters of sages.

59. And he who gives up life there, gives up the world of Bṛhaspati and reaches my world.

60. There is the pond of Vaiśvānara where a single torrent falls from the Himalayan peak.

61. He who bathes there after foregoing six meals, delights himself in the world of Vaiśvānara.

62. And he who gives up life there, remaining in my service, gives up the world of Vaiśvānara and reaches my world.

63. There is the pond of Kārttikeya where fifteen torrents fall from the Himālayas.

64. He who bathes there after fasting six times, sees the auspicious six-faced Kumāra.

65. And he who gives up life there, after performing Cāndrāyaṇa, gives up Kārttikeya and delights in my regions.

66. Then there is the pond called Umākuṇḍa where arose Gaurī, the consort of Mahādeva.

67. He who bathes there after fasting during ten nights sees the goddess Gaurī and delights in her world.

68. And he who gives up life there, after fasting for ten nights, leaves the world of Umā and reaches my world.

69. There is Maheśvara Kuṇḍa which is full of Cakravākas, swans and cranes and where Umā was married (by Maheśvara).

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1. The world of Agni is what seems to be meant here.

70. Three torrents fall there from the Himālaya mountain, which are big, beautiful and clear.

71. He who bathes there after fasting for twelve days, goes to the world of Rudra and is surrounded by women.

72. And he who gives up life there after performing all austerities, leaves the world of Rudra and reaches my world.

73. Then there is Brahmakuṇḍa from where the Vedas arose and where four torrents representing the four Vedas, fall from the Himālayas.

74. On the eastern side a uniform torrent falls which is high and beautiful and has whitish colour representing Sāma.

75. On the northern side is a torrent of clear water golden in colour and representing Ṛk.

76. On the western side is the torrent representing Yajus and on the southern side the one representing Atharva coloured like Indragopa.

77. He who bathes there after fasting for seven nights, reaches the world of Brahmā and remains in his company.

78. And he who gives up life there after subduing his ego, gives up the world of Brahmā and reaches my world.

79. The man who desires to attain bliss must, therefore, go to this Lohārgala of mine.

80. O goddess, this extends over twentyfive yojanas and he who goes there will not have any trace of his actions left in him.

81. This is the greatest of narratives, the highest of all *dharmas* and the purest of the pure.

82. Those of my devotees who read this or listen to this, liberate ten generations of ancestors and ten generations of successors.

83. Those who desire liberation from *saṁsāra* should never forget this at the time of death.

84. Thus have I told you about the greatness and secret of Lohārgala.

85. It is auspicious and holy and brings about happiness to the devotees.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYTWO

Glory of Mathurā Tīrtha

Sūta said:

1. Listening to the greatness of the Lord of three worlds residing at Lohārgala, Earth became wonderstruck.

Earth said:

2. O lord of worlds, with eyes blooming like lotus petals, by your favour I have now heard the great Śāstra.
3. Being your disciple and servant, I have resorted to you. And you are the light of the worlds and their lord.
4. By your favour I have become resplendent like gold and endowed with all Śāstras.
5. For you everything is effortless. The entire world depends on you and nothing acts without your will.
6. Therefore, great pleasure resides in my heart (and curiosity too).
7. So be pleased to tell me whether there is any tīrtha which is even greater than Lohārgala.

Varāha said:

8. O dear Earth, there is no place equal to Mathurā in this world, the nether world or the upper world.

Sūta said:

9. On hearing this, Earth bowed to Varāha and asked again.

Earth said:

10. There are Puṣkara, Naimiṣa and Vārāṇasī. Leaving them out, why do you speak about Mathurā ?

Varāha said:

11. Listen to me. I shall tell you in detail. There is nothing more dear to me than the wellknown Mathurā.
12. It is beautiful, famous and the place of my birth. Listen to its sanctity and glory.
13. People living there certainly get salvation. They get there the same result as accrues during Mahāmakha in Prayāga.

14. The same result is attained there as of (living in) Vārāṇasī for a thousand years.

15. The same result is attained in Mathurā in a moment as of the Kārttika festival in Puṣkara.

16. The same merit is acquired in Mathurā by one who has conquered his senses as is acquired in any other place he thinks of.

17. The foolish person it is that wanders in *saṁsāra* being deluded by my Māyā.

18. Even he who hears the name Mathurā uttered by another gets release from sins.

19. When Janārdana is asleep, all the tīrthas and sacred lakes in the world make their presence in Mathurā.

20. Through Śrāddha in the Mathurā region, the manes become propitiated as long as the great lord remains there.

21. Even those others (who are not my devotees) living in Mathurā attain beatitude by my favour.

22. In Kabjāmraka, Saukara and Mathurā, particularly in the last, salvation is obtained by my favour without Sāṁkhya or Yoga.

23. Those who live pure and devoted in the great city of Mathurā, making offerings and giving alms, are verily gods in human form.

24. In Dvāpara yuga, I will be born as a Kṣatriya in the family of king Yayāti in Mathurā.

25. In my four-fold form, I shall be there for a hundred years, praised by the sages and ready for battle.

26. These four forms[1] will have the colours of sandal paste, gold, Aśoka (flower) and blue lotus respectively.

27. I will then have numerous appellations, sacred and sanctifying and powerful enough to snap the bonds of *saṁsāra.*

28. I will then annihilate, O Earth, thirtytwo wicked demons like Kaṁsa who outrage *dharma.*

29. In that place, the river Yamunā, the daughter of the sun-god flows eternally.

30. Yamunā joins Gaṅgā at Prayāga known as Veṇī, but

1. The four vyūhas, namely Kṛṣṇa (Vāsudeva), Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

Yamunā is hundred times more sacred at Mathurā. There need be no doubt in this regard.

31. There will be many tīrthas in that place, by bathing in which, people can reach my world.

32. And by giving up life there remaining in my service, one is never again born as a mortal, but attains four hands (and reaches my world).

33. By bathing in Avimukta, one gets salvation and by giving up life there, reaches my world.

34. He who bathes in the tīrtha named Viśrānti, reaches my world.

35. He gets the merit of bathing in all the tīrthas by seeing the Lord there.

36. The merit obtained by bathing in Viśrānti is not obtained by sacrifices, penance, meditation or subjugation of mind.

37. He sees with ease the past, present and future and by just two circumambulations, reaches the world of Viṣṇu.

38. There is another tīrtha by bathing in which one gets release from worldly existence and reaches my world.

39. That is the great Prayāga which is not easy to get at even for Devas.

40. He who bathes in this gets the merit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice and goes to the world of Indra and delights there.

41. And he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

42. There is the tīrtha called Kanakhala, by the mere bath in which one gets enjoyment in heaven.

43. There is then the spot named Tinduka by bathing where, O goddess, one remains esteemed in my world.

Now listen to an old story connected with this tīrtha.

44. There is the city Kāmpilya in the Pāñcāla country with abundance of money and grain and ruled by Brahmadatta.

45. In that city lived a barber named Tinduka. Gradually his whole family became extinct.

46. Extremely grieved at this, he gave up every contact and went to Mathurā.

47. He lived there in a colony of Brahmins.

48. Steadfast in his austerities, he used to bathe in Yamunā every day and performed all religious rites for a long time.

49. In course of time he died, but by the prowess of this tīrtha he was born as a high Brahmin.

50. He became a great yogi with knowledge of his past life and a staunch devotee, and by the power of the tīrtha, attained liberation.

51-52. Then there is the Sūryatīrtha which removes all sins, where the sun was worshipped by Bali, son of Virocana, for acquiring wealth when he was banished from his kingdom.

53. He performed penance there for one full year with upraised arms and without food, and in the end attained his aim.

54. The Sun-god was pleased with him and asked him why he was performing such severe penance.

Bali said:

55. "O great god, banished from my kingdom, I am now living in the netherworld. And being penniless, how can I look after my family?"

56. The Sun-god then took out from his crown the Cintāmaṇi gem (which has the power of yielding all desires), and receiving it, Bali returned to the nether world.

57. He who bathes in that tīrtha gets free from all sins, and he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

58. The man who bathes there on Sundays, on the days of the Sun's transit and on the days of the solar and lunar eclipse, gets the benefit of Rājasūya sacrifice.

59. (There is the Dhruvatīrtha) where Dhruva performed penance on his own. He who bathes there becomes esteemed in the world of Dhruva and he who gives up life there reaches my world.

60. He who performs oblations to the manes in the Dhruvatīrtha, particularly in the fortnight when the anniversary of the manes falls, liberates them all.

61. To the south of Dhruvatīrtha is the Tīrtharāja by bathing in which, one attains my world.

62. Further south of it is the Ṛṣitīrtha, by bathing in which one reaches the world of Ṛṣis.

63. And he who gives up life there, becomes esteemed in my world.

64. To the south of the Ṛṣitīrtha is the Mokṣatīrtha by bathing in which one attains *mokṣa* (salvation).

65. There is then the Koṭitīrtha which is not easily reached even by Devas. He who bathes there or makes gifts, becomes exalted in my world.

66. The man who bathes in the Koṭitīrtha and propitiates the manes, liberates them all.

67. And he himself becomes esteemed in the world of Brahmā.

68. In the same place, there is the Vāyutīrtha which is not easily reached even by the manes. He who offers piṇḍa there reaches the world of the Pitṛs.

69. By offering piṇḍa there in the month of Jyeṣṭha one attains the same merit as of doing the same in Gayā.

70. Taking bath, giving gifts, practising *Japa* and performing *homa* in these twelve[1] tīrthas gives the benefit thousand-fold. All sins vanish by simply thinking of them and all wishes are attained by simply listening to the account of their greatness.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYTHREE

Greatness of Mathurā Tīrtha

Varāha said:

1. To the north of Śivakuṇḍa are nine tīrthas. Never was there any greater tīrtha than these and never will be.

2. By merely bathing there, high prosperity is attained and residence in heaven in beautiful form is assured. And he who bathes there (after performing all austerities) goes to my world.

3. There is the tīrtha called Saṁyamana known in all the worlds and by bathing or dying there, one reaches my world.

4. I shall tell you what happened in days of yore in the Saṁyamana tīrtha.

5. A highly sinning and wicked hunter was living in the wellknown Naimiṣa forest.

6. Once he happened to go to Mathurā on the Caturdaśī day of the dark fortnight.

1. Actually only ten are given here. The other two are perhaps Śivakuṇḍa and Saṁyamana described in the next chapter.

7. He wanted to cross Yamunā and for that purpose he went to Saṁyamana.

8. As he was crossing the river there, he was drowned.

9-10. As soon as he lost his life thus, he was born as a king in the Saurāṣṭra country with the name Yakṣmadhanus.

11. He ruled the country very well observing his kingly duties. He married Pīvarī, the handsome daughter of the king of Kāśī.

12. Among his hundreds of wives, she was made the chief and he gave her pleasure in the gardens and woods, as also in fine palaces and attractive sands in the rivers.

13. He was protecting his subjects and giving gifts, but was also deeply immersed in enjoying pleasures.

14. Seventyseven years passed in this manner, and he had by then got seven sons and five daughters.

15. All the five daughters were beautiful and they were married to kings and the sons were settled in different places.

16. Once, when the king was sleeping with his queen Pīvarī, he rose up saying repeatedly 'Alas, alas !'

17. That was at the thought of Mathurā and Saṁyamana (tīrtha) there.

18. Then Pīvarī asked him why he was saying so and he replied:

19. "The intoxicated man, the sleeping man and the mad man sometimes blabber. So please don't ask about what I blabbered while asleep."

Pīvarī said:

20. "If I am your wife, please tell me the truth, and if you are going to hide it, I will give up my life."

21. At these words of his queen, the king replied: "If it is essential that I should tell you, let us go to the city of Mathurā. After going there, I shall tell you the truth.

22-23. (In the meantime) give liberal gifts to the Brahmins and instal our sons and grandsons in proper places taking into account the villages in our possession, the treasury and the jewels."

24. Then the citizens were summoned and told: This ancestral kingdom has to be ruled well.

25. I propose to entrust this duty to my sons with your approval.

26. Realising that people always wish for the kingdom, sons, wives and relations and never the world of Yama, and knowing what is really good for me,

27. I and my queen wish to undertake the trouble of going to Mathurā.

28. What a pity that so far I have been attached to my kingdom. I now understand that there is nothing more pleasurable than renunciation.

29. There is nothing more sorrowful than attachment and nothing more pleasurable than detachment.

30. It is indeed commendable to practically give up all desires.

31. Then crowning the eldest son as king and taking leave of citizens, he started for Mathurā followed by the four units of the army, and reached it after a long time.

32. There he saw the city beautiful like the city of Indra, with its twelve tīrthas, pure and sanctifying.

33. He also saw there the abode of Viṣṇu named Madhuvana by seeing which every one becomes gratified.

34. The man who bathes there on Ekādaśī day in the bright half of the Bhādrapada month, becomes fully gratified.

35. Then there is the third natural garden[1] called Kundavana by going where, O goddess, every one becomes equally gratified.

36. The man who bathes there on Ekādaśī day in the dark half of the Bhādrapada month becomes esteemed in the world of Rudra.

37. The fourth such garden is the Kāmyakavana by going where one becomes exalted in my world.

38. (Bathing) in the pond in Vimala[2] removes all sins, and giving up life there leads to my world.

39. The fifth is Bakulavana by going where one goes to the abode of Agni.

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1. The account of the second appears to be lost.
2. This is perhaps the second garden and is presumably named Vimalavana.

40. At the other bank of Yamunā is Bhadravana, the sixth garden which is dear for gods also.

41. My devotee who goes there, goes to the world of Nāgas by the power of that garden.

42. The seventh is the Khadiravana well known in the world, by going where, O goddess, one goes to my world.

43. The eighth is a great garden named Mahāvana. This is very dear to me and one who goes there goes to the world of Indra.

44. The ninth is called Lohajaṅghavana being looked after by Lohajaṅgha. It is capable of removing all sins.

45. The tenth garden is named Bilvavana held sacred even by the gods. By going there, one attains the world of Brahmā.

46. The eleventh is Bhāṇḍīra which is particularly liked by Yogins. By its very sight one does not enter a womb any more.

47. By reaching this great garden Bhāṇḍīra and seeing lord Vāsudeva there, one gives an end to further births.

48. The twelfth is Bṛndāvana which is looked after by Bṛndā. It removes all sins and is particularly dear to me.

49. Those who see Bṛndāvana and Lord Govinda there, never go to the place of Yama, but go where the meritorious go.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYFOUR

Power of the Tīrthas in Yamunā

Varāha said:

1. Both of them were very glad to see Mathurā of this description.

2. While living there, O Earth, the queen asked the king to tell her the truth as promised by him.

3. The king then asked her to tell him the truth about herself which she too had promised to reveal.

4. Then the virtuous Pīvarī laughed and told the king what he wished to know.

5. "I was living on the bank of river Gaṅgā. I came here to see this city on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Kumuda.

6. As I was crossing the river in a canoe, I fell down in the water and was drowned.

7. But by the power of that tīrtha, I was born as the daughter of the king of Kāśī and I was married by you. But the memory of my past life never left me.

8. All this was due to my losing life in the tīrtha called Dhārāpatanaka (in Yamunā)".

9. Hearing this the king narrated his own former life and of Saṁyamana where he lost his life.

10. Then they bathed in Yamunā and after worshipping me according to rules, died there.

11. And as they had given up all attachments, they reached my world.

12. Thus have I told you about the wonder that occurred there.

13. He who dies in the tīrtha called Dhārāpatanaka, gets all his sins removed and reaches heaven.

14. He who dies after worshipping Yamuneśvara, goes to the world of Viṣṇu and remains there in divine form with four hands, and he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

15. Then there is the very holy spot named Nāgatīrtha by bathing in which one goes to heaven and is never born again.

16. Then there is the tīrtha Ghaṇṭābharaṇaka which purifies everyone. By bathing in it one goes to the world of Sūrya.

17. By giving up life there one certainly goes to my world.

18. I shall tell you, O Earth, about another tīrtha which is known even in the world of Brahmā.

19. By bathing in this (Brahmatīrtha) and drinking the water there, one gets honoured by Brahmā and then reaches my world.

20. There is Somatīrtha in the holy Yamunā where Soma will see me in Dvāpara yuga.

21. He who bathes there remaining steadfast in his duties, delights himself in the world of Soma.

22. And he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

23. There is the Sarasvatī (tīrtha) which removes all sins. By bathing in this even an outcaste becomes a saint.

24. I shall tell you about another tīrtha in Mathurā.[1] He

1. The name of the tīrtha is not given.

who bathes there after fasting for three nights, gets even the sin of killing a Brahmin removed. And he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

25. Then there is Daśāśvamedha (tīrtha) which is resorted to by sages. A bath there makes entry into heaven easy.

26-27. On the western side of Mathurā is the tīrtha called Mānasa which was created by Brahmā from his mind and which is worshipped by sages.

28. Those who bathe there go to heaven and are never born again.

29. There is the Vighnarāja tīrtha by bathing in which one becomes immune from the troubles of Vighnarāja.

30. Those who bathe there particularly on Aṣṭamī, Caturdaśī and Caturthī days, are never troubled by Vighnarāja.

31. This son of Pārvatī wards off all impediments to them in education and in sacrifices and other ceremonies. He who gives up life there, reaches my world.

32. Then there is the holy Koṭitīrtha, by bathing in which one attains the merit of a crore of cows.

33. He who gives up life there without desire or delusion, transcends the world of Soma and reaches my world.

34. At a distance of half a Krośa from there is the temple of Śiva from where he protects Mathurā.

35. By bathing there and drinking the water, the same result as of doing them in Mathurā is obtained. And he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYFIVE

Power of Akrūratīrtha

Varāha said:

1. O goddess, I shall tell you about another important tīrtha named Ananta.

2. I remain there permanently for the good of the world, and people who see me there, attain salvation.

3. Those who go there during equinoxes, solstices and Viṣṇupadī, get freed from all sins.

4. We get then the tīrtha called Akrūra, by bathing in which during solar eclipse, one attains the fruit of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

5. Akrūra is the king of all tirthas, and a bath there confers the same result as of a bath in Prayāga.

6. O Earth, listen to an old story in connection with this tīrtha.

7. There was a devotee of mine named Sudhana, a merchant affluent in money and grain.

8. He was happy with his wife, children and relatives and was highly devoted to me.

9. He was spending a lot of money for his family and in this way a long time passed.

10. Never did he commit any fraud either with the weighing balance or with the weights.

11. Every day at the proper time he performed the worship of Hari with flowers, lamps and fragrant sandalpaste, and also with incense and offering of food.

12. On the Ekādaśī days in both the (bright and dark) fortnights of the month he used to fast and keep awake in the night.

13. He once went to this Akrūra tīrtha and was dancing before me.

14. And when he was doing this keeping himself awake in the night, he was caught by a Brahmarākṣasa.

15. Who was huge in form, black in colour, fierce to look at and with hair vertical on the head.

16. He caught (Sudhana) by the feet and said:

17. "O merchant, I am a Rākṣasa living in this forest. I shall get high satisfaction by eating you up today."

Sudhana said:

18. "Please wait for a while. I shall offer you this fat body of mine nurtured by sumptuous food.

19. Let me complete this vow of keeping awake before Lord Hari.

20. After this is done, I shall come to you quickly when the sun starts rising.

21. You can devour my body when I return to you after this vow of keeping awake meant to propitiate Lord Viṣṇu.

22. Please don't obstruct the performance of this vow. You may eat me as you like soon after my return."

23. Hearing these words of Sudhana, the Brahmarākṣasa who was oppressed by severe hunger, spoke softly to him.

24. "O simple man, what you say is false. How will you come back? Which man will come back when once he is let off from the clutches of the Rākṣasa?"

25. At these words of the Rākṣasa, the merchant said:

26. "The whole world originates from truth and it is established in truth. The great sages well-versed in the Vedas attain their aim through truth.

27. As one who has never been defiled by any bad action in the past life and hence born as man, I swear before you that I will return.

28. After keeping awake and joyfully dancing (before the lord), I shall certainly come back to you. There is nothing false in what I say.

29. By truth is a girl given in marriage. The Brahmins speak truth. The kings remain in truth and the earth is held by truth.

30. Heaven is desired through truth, salvation is got by truth. The sun blazes by truth and the moon shines by truth.

31. Yama takes away (life) by truth, Indra sways by truth. That truth will be lost if I do not return to you.

32-33. If I do not return, I will be stained by the same sin as befalls a person who rapes the wife of another out of lust.

34. If I do not return, the same sin will fall on me as of taking away the gift of land once made.

35. If I do not return, the same sin will fall on me as of disowning a woman after enjoying her well and full.

36. If I do not return, the same sin will fall on me as of breaking a row of persons entitled to remain in the same row when eating.

37. If I do not return, the same sin will fall on me as of cohabiting with a woman after performing śrāddha on the new moon day.

38. If I do not return, I will go the way of those who do not bathe on the Ṣaṣṭhī, Aṣṭamī and Amāvāsyā days,

39. As also the sin similar to the one that accrues as a result of raping in lust the wife of the teacher, brother, son, uncle or friend, will fall upon me.

40. If I do not return, I will get the same sin as of cohabiting with the wife of a king, wife of a Brahmin or a widow.

41. If I do not return, the same sin will fall on me as of one, who having given a daughter once in marriage, gives her to another.

42. If I do not return, I will be stained by the same sin as is incurred by one doing sacrifice for the king or the villagers (for the sake of money).

43. If I do not return, my way will be the same as of those who kill Brahmins, drink liquor, steal (money) or obstruct a vow".

Varāha said:

44. Hearing the words of Sudhana, the Brahmarākṣasa was pleased and he allowed him to go.

45. Released by the Brahmarākṣasa thus, the merchant with a determination danced before me in devotion.

46. When day was dawning he danced more intensely and repeatedly uttered *namo nārāyaṇāya* (bow to Nārāyaṇa).

47. When the period of keeping awake was over, he bathed in Yamunā and after seeing my divine form, went to the city of Mathurā.

48. I then appeared before him as a celestial man and asked him where he was going in such haste.

49. Sudhana then said that he was going quickly to the Brahmarākṣasa.

50. I then forbade him pointing out that is for the living and, when once dead, there can be neither *dharma* nor fame.

51. The merchant then replied to the man "I shall tell you the truth. I have to go to the Brahmarākṣasa."

52. (He went to the Brahmarākṣasa accordingly and said) "I have now returned after happily dancing before Lord Viṣṇu and after keeping awake.

53. O Rakṣasa, you may eat up this body (of mine) as you like.

54. I have never uttered falsehood, O Brahmarākṣasa; you may, therefore, devour me now."

55. Hearing these words of the merchant, the Brahmarākṣasa said in soft tone:

56. "O merchant, I am glad that you have upheld both truth and righteousness. You have great knowledge and merit and that is why you are so.

57. Please transfer to me the whole merit of your having kept awake, and danced, so that I can liberate myself by it."

Sudhana said:

58. "I shall not give you the merit acquired by my dancing, O man-eater, full, half, quarter or even less."

59. Hearing these words of Sudhana, the Brahmarākṣasa said again: "Give me, O magnanimous merchant, the merit of a single dance."

Sudhana said:

60. "I shall not give you my merit. You may do what we have agreed upon.

61. By what fault did you attain this state of being a Brama-rākṣasa? Tell me all that secret."

62. Hearing the words of Sudhana, the Rākṣasa laughed and said: "You may know that I was your neighbour, a Vedic Brahmin named Agnidatta.

63. I was stealing the bricks oi others with a view to building a house for myself. And on my death, I became Rākṣasa.

64. You have now met me. Please do me this help. Give me the merit of a single respite in your service (to god).".

65. The merchant was full of pity, and he said: "O Rākṣasa, I give you the merit of a single dance."

66. By the power of the merit of that single dance, the Rākṣasa gained liberation.

Varāha said:

67. O Goddess, Sudhana then saw lord Janārdana of universal form standing in front of him.

68. The great lord Janārdana in his divine body holding the conch, disc and mace, spoke to him sweetly:

69. "Get into this splendid aerial car and arrive in my world." So saying, the lord disappeared there.

70. Sudhana, although he was in human form, got into the aerial car with his family, and reached the world of Viṣṇu.

71. O Earth, I have thus told you about the power of Akrūratīrtha, a greater one than which there never has been and never will be.

72. By the power of this tīrtha Sudhana got salvation.

73. He who bathes in it on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Kumuda, attains the fruit of Rājasūya sacrifice.

74. He who performs in this tīrtha in the month Kārttikī the Vṛṣotsarga ceremony (letting loose a bull), liberates all his manes.

75. He who performs Śrāddha there during Kārttikī, immediately liberates all forefathers.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYSIX

The Appearance of Mathurā[1]

Varāha said:

1. I shall tell you about the tīrtha called Vatsakrīḍanaka., It is full of red stones and is beautified by red sandal.

2. By simply bathing there, one goes to the world of Vāyu, and he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

3. I shall tell you about another tīrtha, O Earth, namely Bhāṇḍīraka.

4. This is full of trees like Sāla, Tāla, Tamāla, Arjuna Iṅguda, Pīluka and Karīra.

5. He who bathes there observing the rules and fasting, goes to the world of Candra. And he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

6. I shall tell you about my place Bṛndāvana where I play with cows and cowherds.

7. It is a beautiful place and is not easily gained by gods and demons alike.

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1. Although this is the title of the chapter what we get here is the account of some tīrthas.

8. If one takes bath there in the particular spot covered by shrubs and creepers, after fasting for a night, one gets delight in the company of Gandharvas and Apsarases.

9. And he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

10. I shall tell you about another tīrtha in Bṛndāvana, namely the place where the (demon) Keśī was killed.

11. This tīrtha is a hundred times more holy than other tīrthas and a hundred times more holy than this is the spot here where lord Hari rests.

12. There is another speciality, O Earth, in the Keśītīrtha.

13. By offering piṇḍa to the manes there, the result of doing the same at Gayā is obtained. Bath, gifts and homa there, confer the fruit of Agniṣṭoma.

14. Then there are Sūryatīrthas pertaining to the twelve suns.

15. This is the place where the serpent Kāliya was moving about. Kāliya was vanquished by me and the twelve Ādityas installed. I asked the Ādityas to seek a boon.

Ādityas said:

16. "O Lord, if you consider us worthy of receiving a boon, be pleased to grant us bath in this tīrtha".

17. This request of the Ādityas, O Earth, was granted.

18. Mere bath there absolves one of all sins. He who gives life there, reaches my world.

19. Those who die in the strip between the Kāliya in the south and the place where I am installed in the north, are never born again.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYSEVEN

Malayārjuna and other Tīrthas

Varāha said:

1. Beyond Yamunā, there is the tīrtha called Malayārjuna a pond near which (the demon in the form of the cart) Śakaṭa was smashed.

2. By fasting and bathing there, immense merit is derived.

3. By bathing and giving gifts there on Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Jyeṣṭha, one can get absolved of all sins.

4. He who takes bath there on this particular day and sees lord Hari in Mathurā, attains beatitude.

5. Bathing in Yamunā with full control of the mind and high purity and worshipping Lord Viṣṇu properly, brings about final liberation.

6. The manes in the other world always say: "How much we wish that some one born in our family bathes in Yamunā and worships Lord Viṣṇu in Mathurā after due fasting."

7. He indeed is a blessed man who worships Janārdana on the Dvādaśī day in the Jyeṣṭha month and offers piṇḍa to the manes in Yamunā.

8. He who bathes in the tīrtha called Bahula in the same Bṛndāvana, gets an exalted place in the world of Rudra.

9. He who bathes there on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Caitra, certainly goes to my world.

10. There is the pond called Bhāṇḍahrada where the auspicious Ādityas are seen every day.

11. He who bathes in the spot there called Arkasthala, gets freed from all sins and goes to the world of Sūrya.

12. And he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

13. Near Arkasthala there is a well of pure water called Saptasāmudrika which is dear even to the gods.

14. By bathing there, one gets the power to go wherever one likes to go. And he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

15. There is the place called Vīrasthala which is full of lotuses and lilies and where water is very near.

16. He who bathes there after fasting for one night, goes to the world of heroes (Vīraloka) by my grace, and he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

17. Then there is the holy Kuśasthala by bathing where one goes to the world of Brahmā.

18. And he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

19. Then there is Puṣpasthala where there is an important temple of Śiva. By bathing there one goes to the world of Śiva.

20. There is (a chain of five spots called) Pañcadeśa capable of removing all sins. By bathing there, O Earth, one enjoys the company of Brahmā.

21. There is Gopīśvara with capacity to dispel all sins. Sixteen thousand Gopīs were born there for Kṛṣṇa to play with.

22. There by the boy Kṛṣṇa was the pair of Arjuna trees crushed and the (demon in the form of) cart was smashed.

23. While playing with Kṛṣṇa, the Gopīs embraced him but the *dharma* in this was kept hidden.

24. Mātali came there at the behest of Devas and performed ceremonial bath to the lord in the form of the cowherd.

25. Water was brought in seven pots containing sacred herbs and gems, and was poured on him in the midst of Gopīs.

26. The Gopīs were then singing and dancing uttering repeatedly the name of Kṛṣṇa.

27. After consecrating Lord Gopīśvara, Mātali made a well also there with the (water in the) auspicious pots.

28. This is the well Saptasāmudrika with clean water. In front of the lord there are the cowherds.

29. The manes of one who performs Śrāddha in the well Saptasāmudrika with ablutions and piṇḍa, get propitiated.

30. He who offers piṇḍa there when the new moon falls on Monday, liberates seventyseven generations of his ancestors, and they become propitiated for a hundred crores of years.

31. He who dies in the place between the temples of Govinda and Gopīśvara, attains the world of Indra.

32. So too when death occurs in the place between the temples of Bahula, Śiva, and Govinda there, or between those of Gopīśa and Brahmā.

33. By bath, gift and piṇḍa in these places, ten generations of ancestors and ten of successors are liberated.

34. Bath in these leads one to the pleasure of the company of gods, and death there leads one to my world.

35. There is the great tīrtha Vasupatra, and on the southern side of Mathurā, the holy place Phālgunaka.

36. Bathing in them and drinking the water there, lead one to a place of esteem in the world beyond.

37. In Phālguna we get my temple named Vṛṣabhañjanaka.

38. He who bathes there, delights with Devas and he who gives up life there reaches my world.

39. At a distance of half a yojana from Mathurā on the western side, we see the place Tālavana held by the asura Dhenuka.

40. We get there a pond of clear water with lotuses and lilies. By bath and gifts there, one gets whatever is desired.

41. In that place there is the pond called Sampīṭhaka where we get a deep pit full of clear water.

42. He who bathes there after fasting for a night, gets the fruit of Agniṣṭoma, and he who gives up life there reaches my world.

43. When I took birth as the son of Devakī in the house of Vasudeva, I worshipped the sun.

44. As a result, I got a handsome, virtuous and intelligent son.

45. There I saw the sun-god holding lotus in the hand and effulgent with his rays in the month Bhādrapada.

46. On the Saptamī day in the dark half of the month the sun-god appears there.

47. He who takes bath in this pit on that day, finds nothing beyond his reach in this world by the favour of the sun-god.

48. If this is done when this day happens to be Sunday, the effect is absolutely sure for man as well as woman.

49. King Śantanu performed penance here installing the sun-god in front, and he got as his son the mighty Bhīṣma.

50. Getting that son, Śantanu went to Hastināpura. Bath and gift there, fulfils one's desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYEIGHT

The Power of Mathurā-Tīrtha

Varāha said:

1. The Mathurā region extends over twenty Yojanas. Bathing in the tīrthas there removes all sins.

2. In the Mathurā region, which is extremely holy, stay in the rainy season is particularly pleasant.

3. During the time of my sleep, the tīrthas and temples in the seven islands, make their appearance here.

4. O Earth, seeing me in Mathurā after I am awake, is to see me for all time.

5. To see my face after I am awake, is to bring about instantaneous cessation of all sins acquired in the course of seven lives.

6. Those who reside in Mathurā and see lord Keśava there, become fit for salvation.

7. He who bathes in Yamunā gets the fruit of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha and becomes esteemed in my world.

8. Circumambulating lord Keśava in Mathurā is equal to circumambulating the whole earth with its seven islands.

9-10. O Earth, by making the gift of a lamp before lord Keśava together with a vessel full of ghee and a cloth, one gets an aerial car five yojanas long and five broad and full of rows of lamps.

11. It is beautiful, full of pleasures, attended on by Apsarases and it fulfils all desires.

12. Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Cāraṇas praise him for the merit acquired while on earth.

13. At the expiry of all the acquired merit, he is born in a meritorious family.

Earth said:

14-15. Who protects this place from beasts, goblins, demons and others that cause impediments, so that it may yield its proclaimed effects ?

Varāha said:

16. Due to my prowess they never even see this place of mine and they never do any harm to my devotees.

17. Moreover, I have entrusted the four guardian deities with the protection of this place.

18. Indra guards the east, Yama the south, Varuṇa the west holding the noose.

19. The valiant Kubera guards the north and Śiva, the husband of Umā, the middle.

20. He who constructs a temple in Mathurā, becomes fore-armed and gets liberated even while living.

21. He continues to remain in his four-armed form always in the ponds of clear water in Mathurā.

22. He who gives up life there after taking bath, reaches the world of Viṣṇu and enjoys there.

23. I shall tell you about the wonder in the ponds of clear water there.

24. By my power, the water there will be warm in winter and cool like ice in summer.

25. The water does not increase during the rains or decrease during hot season.

26. In Mathurā at every step there is the merit of tīrthas, and bathing there removes all sins.

27. During the rainy season bath may be taken in the large tīrthas with effort, or in the wells, ponds and pits,

28. Or in the confluence of rivers, but one desirous of liberation should necessarily take bath.

29. There is the place called Mucukunda where sleeps Mucukunda, the Vanquisher of demons.

30. He who bathes there accomplishes all desires, and he who gives up life there reaches my world.

31. By extolling lord Keśava one gets rid of all sins acquired in this life as well as in the earlier ones.

32. What is the need for all the mantras if there is devotion for lord Janārdana, for He is the redeemer of all those who are tormented in hell.

33. He who circumambulates Lord Nārāyaṇa and rests near him acquires great merit.

34. O Earth, by seeing Hari in Mathurā after His waking, one becomes fourhanded and is never born again.

35. All sins disappear by circumambulating there on the Navamī day in the north of Kumuda.

36. He who has the sin of killing a Brahmin, drinking liquor, killing a cow or violating a vow, gets purified by wandering in Mathurā.

37-38. He who goes to Mathurā on the Aṣṭamī day and spending the night as a celibate, cleaning the teeth in the morning, washing the clothes and taking the bath, circumambulates there in silence, gets all his sins removed.

39. Even the touch of a person who so circumambulates, accomplishes all that is desired.

40. The same merit as of such circumambulation in attained also by seeing the lord in Mathurā.

41. The offering of piṇḍa and ablutions in the well of pure water in front of the lord there, propitiates the manes very much.

42. There is also the tīrtha called Catussāmudrika which is well known. He who bathes there enjoys himself in the company of gods.

43. He who gives up life there, reaches my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTYNINE

Circumambulation in Mathurā

Earth said:

1. By your favour, O Janārdana, I have now learnt a good deal about the numerous tīrthas and their efficacy.

2. The sort of merit we acquire by resorting to the tīrthas cannot be acquired by gifts, penance, sacrifices or circumambulation of the earth.

3. But it is difficult for people to go to all these tīrthas that lie scattered about in different parts of the earth.

4. So be pleased to tell me whether there is any easy means of doing this.

Varāha said:

5. Listen, O blessed one, I shall tell you the number of tīrthas calculated to be in this earth.

6. By going over the whole earth we can find sixty thousand and sixty hundred crores of tīrthas.

7. These tīrthas as well as devas and stars in the sky are counted by Vāyu who lives as long as the world exists.

8. All these have been visited by Brahmā, Lomaśa, Nārada, Dhruva, the son of Jāmbavatī, Rāvaṇa and Hanumān,

9. As also by Bali by wandering over the surface of the earth with its oceans and forests.

10. Sugrīva has gone to the interior places also. Formerly Indra did the same, so too the Pāṇḍavas.

11. Some sages like Mārkaṇḍeya also have done so by their yogic powers, but none else has done so or can do.

12. Ordinary people with their limited capacity, cannot even think of all these, then why say about their going there.

13. The merit of going to all tīrthas in the seven islands of the earth, is attained, and even more, by going to (the tīrthas) in Mathurā.

14. Circumambulation in Mathurā produces the same effect as circumabulation in the seven islands.

15. Therefore, circumambulation may be properly done in Mathurā by those desirous of accomplishing their desires.

Earth said:

16. Be pleased to tell me the rules of circumambulation at Mathurā.

Varāha said:

17. This was asked of Brahmā by the seven sages in yore and they were told about it.

18. Knowing the account about it in all the Purāṇas, he told them about this matter.

19-20. I tell you that hundred times the merit that accrues from all temples, all tīrthas, all gifts and all rituals for well-being in this world as well as in the world beyond, accrues by the circumambulation in Mathurā. This is the truth.

21. Hearing this the sages bowed to Brahmā and then went to Mathurā and put up their hermitages there.

22. Together with Dhruva they were waiting for the Navamī day in the bright half of the month Kumuda.

23. Circumambulating in Mathurā on that day removes all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY

The order of visits in the Tīrthas of Mathurā

Varāha said:

1. On the Aṣṭamī day in the bright half of the month Kārttika, one should bathe in the Viśrānti tīrtha with a view to worshipping the manes and gods.

2. By seeing Viśrānti and Viṣṇu reposing there, the effect of circumambulation is attained.

3. Fasting for the whole day or taking but a little food, the twig for cleaning teeth may be collected in the evening.

4. Spending the night in continence with the resolved mind, (the devotee) should bathe well, put on clean clothes and take the vow of silence.

5. Taking sesamum, rice and Kuśa grass and with a lamp in hand he shall go to the forest there for the worship of manes and gods.

6. He shall then start his visits in the order in which they were done by the sages like Dhruva.

7. By doing this full of devotion, he will attain all desires and the fruit of Aśvamedha.

8. He shall keep awake for the night and on the Navamī day, just before sunrise, start journey.

9. The first bath in the morning should be taken in the tīrtha Dakṣiṇakoṭi (at the southern end).

10. Then washing the feet and performing *Ācamana*, he shall worship Hanumān, the young Brahmacārin, who confers all auspiciousness.

11. He should be informed of the journey, as difficulties vanish by simply thinking of him and as he brings about success in the attempt.

12. (The prayer is) "You got great success in your journey on behalf of Rāma. May you grant me success in this undertaking of mine (to visit the tīrthas)."

13. After prayer to Hanumān, perform worship to Gaṇeśa with lamp, flowers and offerings of food.

14. Then Lord Viṣṇu, reposing there as Padmanābha, should be informed as he is the dispeller of all fear and the dispensor of all success. The mother goddesses also should be informed.

15. First there is the goddess Vasumatī, then Aparājitā installed in the armoury who removes all fears.

16. Then there are Kaṁsavāsanikā, Augrasenā, Carcikā and Vadhūṭī who annihilate demons.

17. There is also Jayadā. These are goddesses worshipped by the gods. These as well as the goddesses installed in the houses

and structures may be worshipped and their permission for the journey sought.

18. He shall go to Dakṣiṇakoṭi without speaking. After taking bath there, libations are to be given to the manes and Lord (Viṣṇu) should be saluted.

19. Then he is to go to Ikṣuvāsā worshipped by Lord Kṛṣṇa and where, as a boy, he played with the cowherds and where the tīrthas were established by the great sages.

20. Vaṣaṭputra is to be visited next where we get Arkasthala, Vīrasthala, Kuśasthala, Puṇyasthala and Mahāsthala.

21. These five spots take away all sins, and their mere sight gives one the company of Brahmā.

22. The result is got in full by seeing Śiva (installed as) Siddhamukha there.

23. Then Hayamukti should be visited where the sages speak about an old incident.

24. That a prince once went there riding on a horse, and then the horse got salvation and the prince alone remained there,

25. Which shows that one should not go there in any vehicle (but walking) if the result is to be achieved.

26. Seeing and touching him (the horse erected) in that tīrtha removes all sins. There is the Śivakuṇḍa by bathing in which one attains great results.

27. Seeing the Jasmine of Kṛṣṇa also produces success, so also by going to the Kadamba grove.

28. On the southern side is the Yoginī Carcikā surrounded by other Yoginīs, guarding Kṛṣṇa.

29. There are two mother goddesses named Aspṛśyā and Aspṛśā, whose sight gives great protection to children.

30. Then he should go to the holy Varṣaghāta, bathe there and offer libations to the manes. That removes all sins.

31. He should then go to the temple where Śiva is enshrined as the protector of the place. That makes the visit to Mathurā fruitful.

32. There is the Kṛṣṇakrīḍāsetubandha where the Lord made a dam for children to play.

33. He used to play with the cowherd boys there every day. He continues to visit it always.

34. There is Balihrada where the Lord used to play in water. Its very sight takes away all sins.

35. There is the place where Kṛṣṇa used to play with cocks. By the sight of this (Kukkuṭakrīḍana) even a heinous man gets salvation.

36. There is a group of pillars with good crests which were anointed with scents and worshipped by Kṛṣṇa.

37. To circumambulate it and offer it worship is to get absolved of all sins and go to the world of Viṣṇu.

38. (The visit to the place) where Vāsudeva lay alone for protecting the pregnancy of Devakī, removes all sins.

39. Then he should go to Nārāyaṇasthāna and go round Nārāyaṇa and other deities there for liberation.

40. He may then announce his visit to Vināyaka and also to Kubjikā and Vāmanā, the two Brāhmaṇīs protected by Kṛṣṇa.

41. Getting their approval, be may proceed to Garteśvara to see Śiva there so that the aim of his visit may be accomplished.

42. In that place there is also the goddess Mahāvidyeśvarī who protects it, protects the devotee and gives him success.

43. By seeing Prabhāmallī there, all desires are fulfilled. She remains there for guarding Kṛṣṇa.

44. There is another goddess who remains there always giving success.

45. She was installed there by Kṛṣṇa Balabhadra and Gopas when they thought of killing Kaṁsa and assembled there to consider the strategy.

46. She confers success as well as enjoyment. She is called Siddheśvarī (as she gives *siddhi* success) and Saṅketakeśvarī (as she was installed at the *Saṅketa* or the place of their meeting.)

47. There is a deep pit of holy placid water, where we can see Lord Śiva with the name Gokarṇeśvara, by whose mere sight one gets rid of all sins.

48. Seeing river Sarasvatī there, one derives everything auspicious.

49. Then Gaṇeśa, the remover of all impediments, may be worshipped. Much benefit is got by seeing him.

50. The highly purifying Gaṅgā is there, whose sight, touch or even thought bestows great benefits.

51. There is the place called Rudramahālaya having the appearance of Śiva's face. Seeing this confers the same benefit as by staying there.

52. At Uttarakoṭi (the northern end), there is again Gaṇeśa. Here Lord Kṛṣṇa was playing dice with the Gopīs.

53. Merrily playing with them, the Lord won all of them and their wealth in the game. He gave them all to the Gopas who commemorated the event there.

54. The visit to this place where Kṛṣṇa played in his boyhood, dispels all sins.

55. The sages contemplate on him in the exact form and in the exact deeds of his in his boyhood.

56. The devotee should go to this Rudramahālaya of pure water in Yamunā, bathe there and give libations to the manes.

57. Then he should go to Gārgyatīrtha, Bhadreśvaratīrtha and Somatīrtha.

58. After bathing in the Somatīrtha, he should worship Someśvara for the fulfilment of the aim of his visit.

59. At the confluence of Sarasvatī, he may do, according to rules, rites in propitiation of gods, manes, sages and men. That will give him merger in Lord Viṣṇu.

60. He should then go to tīrthas Ghaṇṭābharaṇaka, Garuḍa, Keśava, Vaikuṇṭha, Ghaṇḍavelaka, Saṁyamana, Asikuṇḍa,

61. Gopa, Muktikeśvara and Vailakṣagaruḍa, all of which are extremely holy.

62. They are as holy as Viśrāntitīrtha and the devotee may move about here with full control of the senses.

63. After propitiating gods and manes he may pray: "O Lord Avimukteśa, worshipped by seven sages, be pleased to make my perambulations in Mathurā fruitful."

64. After praying thus to Śiva, the protector of the place, he should go to Viśrānti (again) and perform libations to the manes.

65. Then, resting for a while, he should go to the temple of Sumaṅgalā and bow to her and pray for his success.

66. "O most auspicious goddess, the fulfiller of all desires, may this visit of mine be fruitful by your favour".

67. Then he is to go to Lord Pippalādeśvara, the Śiva consecrated by the sage Pippalāda, and anoint this deity's head.

68. The sage was saved by Śiva and so he consecrated him there with his own name.

69. Then, after seeing the serpent Kārkoṭaka, he may proceed to see the goddess installed by Kṛṣṇa.

70-71. On hearing about the wicked intentions of Kaṁsa at first, the cloth over the face of Kṛṣṇa was placed there for (good) omen.

72. On entering that place, an agreeable sound is heard, and there Kṛṣṇa has installed his auspicious sister.

73. Out of fear, Kṛṣṇa invoked the goddess Caṇḍikā also and installed her there with the name Ārtiharā.

74. By seeing this goddess, one becomes very happy.

75. She appeared in the north when Kṛṣṇa invoked her for good omen when he started for killing Kaṁsa. By seeing her all desires are accomplished.

76. In order to kill the wrestlers, Kṛṣṇa invoked Vajrānana, and after killing them, he installed him there.

77. And then Kṛṣṇa gave to every deity whatever was sought of him. Everything auspicious was bestowed on them.

78. The (memory of the) deeds of Kṛṣṇa in his boyhood, (it may be noted), takes away all sins.

79. Finally, after seeing Sūrya, the principal deity of the people of Mathurā, and giving gifts there, the visit may be concluded.

80. Visiting the different places in this manner on the Navamī day in the bright half of the month Kumuda, one goes to the world of Viṣṇu with the whole family.

81. As many people in his clan gain permanent abode in Sūrya as there are steps in his perambulation in Mathurā.

82. Even those who have committed the murder of Brahmin, taken liquor, stolen wealth, impeded vows, cohabited with prohibited women or carried away the wives of others, get absolved of their sins, if they visit Mathurā in this way.

83-84. Those who live in distant places get cleansed of their sins at the sight of the person who has returned after his ritualistic visit to Mathurā.

85. Even listening to the narration about this by one who has returned from Mathurā removes all evil and leads to heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYONE

The greatness of Devavana

Earth said:

1. O Kṛṣṇa, what is the way (for liberation) for those ignorant people who have no knowledge of righteous actions and (hence) are condemned to hell ?

2. Tell me by what means they can avoid the sorrows of hell ?

Varāha said:

3. For all those cursed people who never do righteous deeds it is goddess Mathurā (the Mathurā region with all its tīrthas) that removes all sins and sorrows of hell.

4-5. Those who live in Mathurā, those who resort to the tīrthas there, those who do perambulation there, those who see the woods there and those who do with might amidst them hundred and one[1], never go to hell but go to heaven.

6. (Among the woods), the first is Madhuvana, the second Tālavana, the third Kundavana,

7. The fourth Kāmyakavana, the fifth Bahuvana, the sixth Bhadravana,

8. The seventh Khādiravana well-known in the world, the eighth Mahāvana always dear to me,

9. The ninth is the holy Lohārgalavana, the tenth Bilvavana worshipped by gods,

10. The eleventh Bhāṇḍīravana and the twelfth Vṛndakāvana. Those who see these will not have to go to hell.

11. Those who visit these worlds with full control of mind, go to the world of Indra.

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1. What this refers to is not clear.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYTWO

The greatness of Cakratīrtha

Varāha said:

1. Listen, O Earth, I shall tell you about another thing namely what occurred in days of yore in Cakratīrtha to the north of Mathurā.

2. There once lived a pious Brahmin in the city of Mahāgṛhodaya which is a jewel to the whole earth.

3. He went from there with his son to the holy Śāligrāma.

4. He lived there with full control of senses, bathing in the tīrthas and worshipping the deities.

5. There he got the acquaintance of a Siddha (with yogic powers)who belonged to Kalpagrāma and was living in Kānyakubja.

6. As days passed, he heard the Siddha describe the glory of Kalpagrāma.

7-8. The Brahmin then desired to go there and requested the Siddha to help him in this on account of their mutual friendship.

9. Hearing the words of the Brahmin, the Siddha said that only Siddhas could go there and not one like him.

10. But he offered to take him there with his son by his yogic power.

11-12. Then holding the Vaidic Brahmin in the right hand and his intelligent son in the left, he flew up and released them both at Kalpagrāma.

13. They lived there for a long time and then the Brahmin became afflicted by an ailment.

14-15. He then reached the last stage of his life and wishing to die in peace, he asked his son to take him without delay to the bank of Gaṅgā.

16. The son took the father to the bank of Gaṅgā, but he was crying, out of his affection for the father.

17. There a long time passed, and he was controlling himself out of devotion for the father.

18. In Kalpagrāma, the beautiful daughter of the Siddha was on the look-out for a suitable husband for her, but could get none.

19. There one day the Brahmin's son chanced to enter the house of the Siddha for food.

20. The Siddha asked about his whereabouts and he told him everything.

21. Then knowing his identity by his yogic power, he honoured him and gave him his daughter in marriage.

22. From then onwards he was taking food in the father-in-law's house and remaining near the father, attending on him.

23. As time passed, the father became extremely weak and the son asked the father-in-law about it.

24. "When will my father die?', he asked. The father-in-law laughed and told him.

25. "O Brahmin, your father has been eating Śūdra's food for a long time. Because of this, death stands away from him.

26. (The essence of) this food remains in his feet and not above the knees. When the effect of the Śūdra's food is over, he will die."

27. He reported to the father what the father-in-law said.

28. Hearing this the old man condemned himself very much.

29. At sunrise the next day the son went to the father-in-law's house, as usual.

30. When the son was gone, the father, being very much afflicted by his illness and wishing to die, stood up and looked around.

31. Seeing a stone near him he dragged it towards him by his foot and with it smashed both his feet. He then died.

32. When the son returned after his bath and food, he saw the father dead (and knew how).

33. He wept for long, but then he coolly thought of the Śāstra and came to the conclusion that the father did not deserve obsequies,

34. Because Āpastamba (the law-giver) has declared so regarding those that die by snake-bite, by wounds caused by animals with their horns, by the bite of carnivorous animals or by suicide,

35. And one who commits suicide is long tormented in hell; for him expiations may be done but not libation through usual obsequies.

36. Fate is powerful and valour is helpless there.

37. He then went to his father-in-law's house, only to be told by him in great sorrow.

38. "The sin of killing a Brahmin has come upon you. So you may go wherever you like".

39. He then said to the father-in-law: "I never committed the murder of a Brahmin at any time. Then how has this sin come upon me?"

40. Hearing these words of the son-in-law, the father-in-law said: "O dear man, the means of death was suggested to your father by you. And by that fault the effect of killing the Brahmin has come upon you.

41. By sleeping near such a condemned person, by eating with him and by talking to him, one gets condemned oneself in the course of one year.

42. Therefore, O great Brahmin, you can no more live in my house."

43. Hearing these words of the father-in-law, he requested him to direct him what he might do when thus rejected.

44. The ascetic Brahmin then asked him to leave Kalpagrāma and go to Mathurā, as nowhere else would it be possible for him to get himself purified.

45. He immediately left Kalpagrāma and in due course reached Mathurā.

46. There he began to live outside the settlement of the Brahmins.

47-48. He started feeding himself on the remnants of the food from the rest-house constructed in Mathurā by king Kuśika of Kanyāpura with provision to feed two thousand Brahmins every day.

49. He used to take bath in Cakratīrtha, but never begged alms for his food.

50. As days passed in this manner, the father-in-law began to think about him and knew by his yogic power what he was doing.

51. He persuaded his daughter to go to Mathurā and give her husband food.

52. By the spiritual power (of the father), she could go to Mathurā every day (from Kalpagrāma) with food for her husband.

53. At the close of the day, she used to go there with food and he used to eat what was given by his wife.

54. He used to keep his eating vessel in a hollow and live in the rest-house. In this way a full half-year passed.

55. Then the people there began to ask him as to where he was staying and from where he was taking food.

56. He then told them the whole matter. Then, O Earth, all those Brahmins declared in one voice that he had become purified.

57. "You have already become purified by the power of Cakratīrtha. You have now become futher purified by this declaration of ours".

58. Hearing their words, the Brahmin became very happy and went from there to Cakratīrtha for bath.

59. Then the wife arrived with food and, delighted at heart, spoke to him.

60. "Take this food I have brought for you. I now see you free from sin that was in you".

61. Hearing this, he asked her to say again what she said.

62. She did so and added, "I have not been speaking to you before since you were possessed of the sin of killing a Brahmin.

63. Now you have become freed from it by the power of Cakratīrtha. O my lord, get up, let us go to the pleasant Kalpagrāma".

64. He then went with her to Kalpagrāma.

65. For Bhadreśvara the offering of money is commendable and before this deity there is a vessel for putting it. The full benefit of Cakratīrtha is got only by seeing Bhadreśvara.

66. O Earth, Cakratīrtha is hundred times more holy than Kalpagrāma. The sin of killing a Brahmin is removed there by fasting for a full day and night.

67. Of what need is Kalpagrāma or Vārāṇasī for one who goes to Mathurā and dies there ?

68. Even a bird, why a worm too, that dies there becomes four-armed (like Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYTHREE

The Greatness of Kapilavarāha

Varāha said:

1. I shall now tell you about another thing, namely what occurred in days of yore in Vaikuṇṭhatīrtha.

2. The city of Mithilā was ruled by king Janaka. The people of Mithilā, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, started on a pilgrimage.

3. They bathed in the tīrtha Saukara and then reached Mathurā.

4. Great devotion to Mathurā arose in them and they all stood assembled in Vaikuṇṭhatīrtha.

5. A Brahmin among them had clear signs of the sin of killing a Brahmin, because blood was always oozing from his hand.

6. This was clearly perceptible and it never stopped although he had gone to many tīrthas.

7. But he had not gone to Vaikuṇṭhatīrtha before. And now that he went there, this oozing of blood ceased and all were surprised at this.

8. The Lord then appeared in the form of a Brahmin and asked them what had happened.

9. They told him about the sinful Brahmin and what had happened then.

10. The Lord said : "As the result of his bath in the Vaikuṇṭhatīrtha, the sin of killing a Brahmin has left him. So you need not be surprised at this. It is all due to the power of this tīrtha."

11. The Lord then disappeared there. O Earth, such is the greatness of this tīrtha.

12. He who bathes in Vaikuṇṭhatīrtha gets removed of his sins and he goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

13. I shall tell you about another, namely Gandharvakuṇḍa in the holy Asikuṇḍa.

14. He who bathes there, delights in the company of Gandharvas and he who gives up life there, reaches my world.

15. The Mathurā region extends over twenty yojanas and is like a lotus with Lord Keśava in its central part.

16. Those who die in this central part get liberation and become gods.

17. Those who see Lord Keśava on the western side will not get any sorrow.

18. Those who see the Lord on the northern side never fall into the cycle of births and deaths again.

19. Those who see the Lord in Viśrānti on the eastern side certainly gain liberation.

20. On the Southern side there is a divine image of mine.

21. It is long and beautiful and he who sees it delights himself in the company of Brahmā.

22. In the Kṛtayuga there was a king named Māndhātā. I was propitiated by him with a devout mind.

23. Pleased at this, I gave him this image and it was worshipped by him for his own salvation.

24. It was at the time of (Śatrughna's) killing Lavaṇa at Mathurā, it was installed there. It is holy, divine and resplendent.

25. There was a great sage by name Kapila who was devoted to me.

26. He made by his mind an image of (Viṣṇu in the form of) Varāha and was worshipping it every day.

27. The sage Kapila was propitiated by Indra, and pleased at this, he gave him this divine idol.

28. From then onwards, Indra was worshipping it with devotion and delight. As a result, he attained matchless divine knowledge.

29. Once the demon Rāvaṇa went to the world of Indra to conquer heaven by his might.

30. Severe fighting then followed between Rāvaṇa and Indra.

31. The gods together with Indra were defeated by Rāvaṇa and he then entered Indra's abode.

32. In that splendid house decorated with numerous jewels, he saw the idol of Kapilavarāha and prostrated before it.

33. But being deluded by it, he began to pray.

34. "O Lord Mādhava, Dāmodara, Hṛṣīkeśa, the holder of earth, the destroyer of Hiraṇyākṣa, be pleased to save me.

35. I bow to you, the essence of Vedas. I bow to you Vāsu-

deva. I bow to you in your form as the tortoise. I bow to you Nārāyaṇa.

36. I am not able to see you or ask anything, O abode of all virtues, the destroyer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

37. I bow to you, the Lord of Lords, the refuge of all devotees. I bow to you in all devotion. Be pleased with me."

38. At this prayer of Rāvaṇa, the Lord of the worlds adopted a gentle form.

39. Rāvaṇa then went near and attempted to raise the idol in order to put it in his Puṣpakavimāna, but he could not.

40. Surprised at this, he exclaimed: "O Lord, I was able to raise mount Kailāsa together with Śiva. You are here in such a small form, still I am unable to raise it.

41. I bow to you, god of gods, be pleased to enable me to take you to the great city of Laṅkā".

Varāha said:

42. Kapila (varāha) then told him that being a Rākṣasa he was not a Vaiṣṇava and he could not have the sort of devotion (necessary to achieve his aim).

43. Rāvaṇa said: "O great being, unflinching devotion has dawned on me by your sight. I bow to you. I wish to take you (to my city)".

44. The Lord then assumed a little form and so he was able to lift him and place him in his Puṣpakavimāna.

45. He installed me at Laṅkā and I stood there for a long time in his house worshipped by him.

46. Rāma, the Lord of Ayodhyā, then came there and killed Rāvaṇa in battle, and installed his brother Vibhīṣaṇa on the throne of Laṅkā.

47. Vibhīṣaṇa then offered everything to Rāma.

Rāma said:

48. "O Rākṣasa Vibhīṣaṇa, I shall not have anything to do with all this. You may give me that idol alone which was taken here from the city of Indra.

49. If you give me that, I shall take it to Ayodhyā and worship it every day".

50. He then gave Rāma the Kapila (Varāha) and Rāma carried it in the Puṣpaka.

51. He installed it at Ayodhyā and worshipped it there for hundred and ten years.

52. He then sent Śatrughna for killing Lavaṇa. Śatrughna bowed to him and started with an army with all its four divisions.

53. He then killed the terrific demon Lavaṇa and entered the city of Mathurā.

54. He settled there twenty-six thousand Vedic Brahmins who were all equal to me.

55. (Even) a non-Ṛgvedic Brahmin of Mathurā is equal to one who has mastered the four Vedas. To feed one of them is equivalent to feeding a crore of other Brahmins.

56. Thus have I told you about Lavaṇa's killing (by Śatrughna).

57. When Rāma came to know of the success of Śatrughna he asked him to seek of him any boon he wished.

58. Hearing this, Śatrughna said, "O Lord, if you are pleased with me and consider me worthy of receiving a boon, give me this (idol of Kapilavarāha)".

59. Hearing these words of Śatrughna, Rāma, said, "Take this (idol of) god in the form of Varāha.

60. That whole region is very much blessed, the city of Mathurā in particular. The people of Mathurā who worship this Kapila (Varāha) are highly blessed.

61. All sins disappear when he is seen, touched, contemplated upon, bathed or anointed.

62. When he is bathed or worshipped every day, he not only removes our sins but grants *mokṣa*."

63. O Earth, so saying Rāma gave him the idol.

64. Receiving it, Śatrughna went to Mathurā.

65. He installed it in the middle of the city and worshipped it. In this way the Lord permanently came to be there.

66. By seeing this, the same result is obtained as by offering piṇḍa in Gayā during Puṣkara in the month of Jyeṣṭha.

67. The same result is also obtained in Viśrānti, Govinda, Hari, Keśava and Dīrghaviṣṇu.

68. My lustre is at Viśrānti in the morning, Dīrghviṣṇu at noon and Keśava in the evening.

69. This knowledge was kept a secret for a long time. Since you are my devotee and disciple, I imparted this to you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYFOUR

The greatness of Annakūṭa

Varāha said:

1. There is the highly holy place called Govardhana at a distance of two yojanas to the west of Mathurā.

2. There is a pond in it full of trees and creepers and there are four tīrthas in it.

3. In the east is the Indratīrtha, in the south Yamatīrtha, in the west Varuṇatīrtha and in the north Kaberatīrtha, and I remain playing in the middle.

4. He who bathes in the Indratīrtha with due austerities, gets over all opposites and delights in Indraloka.

5. He who bathes in the Yamatīrtha in the south after observing all the necessary rites, goes to the Yamaloka and delights there.

6. And he who gives up life there, without desire or delusion, leaves Yamaloka and goes to my world.

7. He who bathes in Varuṇatīrtha, goes to the abode of Varuṇa and becomes purified of all sins.

8. And he who gives up life there without desire or anger, leaves Varuṇaloka and goes to my world.[1]

9. He who bathes in the middle, delights with me, and he who gives up life there, goes to my world.

10. The devotee should then go to Annakūṭa and circumambulate it. He will then become free from further birth. This, I tell you, is true.

11. After bathing in Mānasagaṅgā, seeing Lord Hari in Govardhana and circumambulating Annakūṭa, one will have nothing to worry about.

12. By giving piṇḍa to the manes on new moon day falling on Monday, one gets the merit of Rājasūya sacrifice,

13. The same result as is obtained by giving piṇḍa in Gayā, is obtained here also, and no one need have any doubt regarding this.

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1. After this there must be a verse relating to the Kuberatīrtha, but it is missing.

14-15. Going around Govardhana and seeing Hari there, confers the same result as of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha.

Earth said:

16. Please tell me about the power of Annakūṭa and the rules of its circumambulation.

Varāha said:

17. This should be done in Govardhana on the Ekādaśī day in the bright half of the month Bhādrapada, after fasting.

18. At sunrise, bath should be taken in Mānasagaṅgā and the mount Govardhana and Lord Hari at its top should be propitiated.

19. Then bath should be taken with the rites at Puṇḍarīka and worship should be made to Puṇḍarīka as well as to the gods and manes.

20. This removes all sins and leads one to the abode of Viṣṇu.

21. Then bath should be taken at the Apsarastīrtha, where bath and libations remove all sins and bring about the result of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha.

22. There is the tīrtha called Saṅkarṣaṇa guarded by Balabhadra. It removes the sin of killing a cow by merely bathing in it.

23. Near Annakūṭa is a *tīrtha* made by Indra. There a sacrifice meant for propitiating Indra was stopped by Kṛṣṇa.

24. The large quantity of food collected there for the worship of Indra was distributed among his own men.

25. The (enraged) Indra was pouring rain heavily and, to protect the cows from this, the big mount was raised and held over them (by the Lord).

26. This came to be known as Annakūṭa (literally, heap of food) and had to be worshipped by Indra himself.

27. Lord Viṣṇu satisfied here the gods, goddesses, cows and sages. By offering libations there, one attains the fruit of a thousand sacrifices.

28. Then there is the pool called Kadambakhaṇḍa with clean water. By bathing in it and offering libations, one attains the world of Brahmā.

29. The devotee should then go to Devagiri which extends over a distance of hundre d cubits. By bathing and worshipping there, the merit of Vājapeya sacrifice is attained.

30. Seeing the great lord there also brings about great merit. By bathing there and offering libations, one goes to heaven with gratification.

31. A little to the north of (Mānasa) Gaṅgā, there took place the battle between lord Kṛṣṇa and the demon Ariṣṭa.

32. A tīrtha was formed at the place where Ariṣṭa, who had assumed the form of a bull, was angrily hit by the lord's fist.

33. Kṛṣṇa bathed at this wonderful tīrtha which appeared at the place of his killing the bull.

34. But he was sorry for having brought upon himself the sin of killing the bull although it was a demon.

35. Then Rādhā embraced Kṛṣṇa and told him about the pond which was known after her name and which was not far from there.

36. This Rādhākuṇḍa is capable of removing all sins (and Kṛṣṇa got rid of the sin there).

37. By bathing in Ariṣṭakuṇḍa and Rādhākuṇḍa, one gets the fruit of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (respectively). There need be no doubt in this matter. The sin of killing a cow, man or Brahmin disappears there instantaneously.

38. There is the tīrtha called Mokṣarāja whose very sight dispels all sins and confers salvation.

39. On the eastern side is the tīrtha called Indradhvaja because of Indra's banner being raised there.

40. Those who bathe there go to heaven and those who die there are never born again.

41. Then by bathing in the spot called Cakratīrtha in the Pañcatīrtha, the devotee should dedicate the fruit of his pilgrimage to Hari.

42. Finishing thus the pilgrimage, he should keep awake at Govardhana for purification from sins.

43. Keeping thus awake on the night of the Ekādaśī day, he should bathe early morning on the Dvādaśī day and offer, according to his means, piṇḍa for the manes.

44. He who offers libation in this manner for the liberation of manes, gets freed from all sins and attains supreme Brahman.

45. I have thus told you about the circumambulation of Annakūṭa. This is laid down for the month of Āṣāḍha as well.

46. He who listens with attention to this account of the greatness of Govardhana gets the result of bathing in Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYFIVE

The Power of Catuḥsāmudrika well

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, now listen to what I say about what happened at Pratiṣṭhāna in the Deccan region.

2. In that city there lived a wealthy Vaiśya by name Suśīla with his wife and several children.

3. Always absorbed in the affairs of his family, he never turned his attention to religious matters like holy bath, gift, recitation of mantras, performance of homa or worship of god.

4. He was always engaged in trade and a long time passed like this. He never met any pious people.

5. He never listened to any discourse on dharma and he had no attachment towards Brahmins or gods.

6. He was incurring a lot of sin by his selfish deeds but he did not realise this.

7. It never occurred to him that gifts are necessary.

8. Though he was quite wealthy and was living in the great city of Pratiṣṭhāna, he never gave away anything to anyone. And not only that, he could not bear to see others giving.

9. Though deeply attached to his wife and children, in due course he died.

10. On death, he became a ghost and began to wander in places without water.

11. Full of thirst, he spent a long time like this in the desert.

12. A caravan of traders happened to pass by among whom were some from Mathurā.

13. When that moved away, he resorted to the foot of a tree and began to remain there.

14. He was fierce and terrific with long canines, short in arms, long in chin, big in eye, and cat-like in face.

15. After a long time, by his good luck, a merchant named Vibhu happened to pass by that place.

16. Seeing him even at a long distance, the ghost became glad. He danced towards him and said:

17. "You have now become the object of my food. Where do you wish to go?" At these words of the ghost, the merchant was fear-stricken and he began to run.

18. The ghost caught hold of him and said: "You are the food for me come of its own accord. I shall eat your flesh and drink your blood".

19. Hearing this, the merchant said:

20. "I have reached this forest on my way to a place to seek something to maintain my family. I have an aged father in my house, and also my mother and virtuous wife.

21. If you are going to eat me, my family also will die".

22. Hearing his words, the ghost asked him to tell him from where he was coming.

Vibhu said:

23. Between mount Govardhana and river Yamunā, there is the beautiful city of Mathurā known all over the world. I live there in my ancestral house.

24. All the wealth I had accumulated there was stolen by thieves and I became penniless.

25. With the little that was left, I reached this desert.

26. I have thus come before you (by chance). You may do (with me) whatever you like.

The ghost said:

27. "I sympathise with you and I am not going to eat you. I shall release you on condition that you will do what I say.

28. You return to Mathurā for my sake I shall tell you what you should do there.

29. Take a ritualistic bath in the well called Catuḥsāmudrika, and offer piṇḍa there in my name. Then give me the fruit of this bath and go away as you please".

30. Hearing the words of the ghost, Vibhu said:

31. "I shall not go back to Mathurā without money. You may eat my body and satisfy yourself".

The ghost said:

32. There is a lot of money in your house. So go there and oblige me. Please don't delay.

Vibhu said:

33. "There is no money in my house as you say. All the wealth that is left is the house.

34. There is the fame of my ancestors, but that, of course, cannot be sold".

35. The ghost laughed and said: "There is certainly wealth in your house as I told you. A mass of gold is kept in a cavity in the house.

36. So return with pleasure. Retrace your path to Mathurā".

Sūta said:

37. The merchant was very much pleased and asked him how it was that he possessed the knowledge of such secrets when he was in that state.

38. Then he told him about his former life. "There is a great temple of Viṣṇu in the city of Pratiṣṭhāna.

39. From early morning Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras gather there.

40. A reciter would read Purāṇic stories and a friend of mine always used to listen to this.

41. He once persuaded me very much to go there with him to this Viṣṇu temple.

42. I did so and seated myself near him. Then I heard (the reciter say) about the sacred well where all the four oceans meet.

43. I heard about the efficacy of this well and the merit it brings about.

44. All the people present there gave presents to the reciter, but I remained quiet although persuaded by the friend.

45. The friend asked me again to give whatever I liked, and, thus insisted, I gave a small gold coin.

46. In course of time, I died and by the decision of Vaivas-

vata (Death god), I became a ghost from which state it is difficult for me to redeem myself.

47. No gift was made by me, no offering made in fire, no bath was taken in a tīrtha and no libation was made to the manes. The result is this ghosthood.

48. I have told you now what you asked. Please do go to Mathurā".

49. Hearing these words of the ghost, Vibhu said:

50. "How do you maintain yourself at the foot of this tree ?"

The ghost said:

51. "I have told you about all that happened.

52. By the power of the gift of the gold coin I gave to the reciter I remain always satisfied.

53. As I had given it without any motive, my knowledge remains in me even though I have become a ghost."

54. The merchant then returned to Mathurā and did all that was requested of him by the ghost. And the ghost got liberation and went to heaven.

55. O Earth, I have thus told you about the greatness of Mathurā and how the offering of piṇḍa in the Catuḥsāmudrika well leads to liberation.

56. Those who die here in a tīrtha, house, temple or square, gain liberation but not elsewhere.

57. A sin incurred elsewhere is eradicated in a tīrtha, but a sin incurred in a tīrtha sticks on.

58. But a sin committed at Mathurā disappears there itself, but this city is so holy that there is no sin there.

59. The ungrateful, the drunkard, the thief and the vow-breaker all get cleansed of their sins in Mathurā.

60. A resident of Mathurā acquires more merit than one (performing penance) standing on one foot for a thousand years.

61. All residents of Mathurā are gods in human form even if they have no control of senses or are fond of others' wives.

62. Those who make offerings to gods, give alms, die without anger, inclined to take bath in tīrthas, are all gods in human form.

63. Honouring a single Brahmin of Mathurā is equivalent to honouring a thousand other Brahmins.

64. A Brahmin of Mathurā without knowledge of the Veda is equivalent to one with the knowledge of all Vedas elsewhere.

65. The very presence of a man from Mathurā in a tīrtha or temple makes it more auspicious.

66. Giving up four Vedas, honour a man of Mathurā. All beings and gods get pleased.

67. The celestials find the residents of Mathurā four-armed because they are Viṣṇu in human form.

68. But this is perceptible only to those with knowledge, not to others.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYSIX

The power of Asikuṇḍa

Earth said:

1. I have been told, O great god, about various tīrthas. Be pleased to tell me now about the tīrtha named Asikuṇḍa.

Varāha said:

2. There was once a virtuous and renowned king named Sumati who went to heaven as a result of pilgrimage.

3. Then his son named Vimati began to rule the ancestral kingdom.

4. Nārada once went to him and the king duly honoured the sage with seat, *pādya* and *arghya*.

5. Receiving all this, Nārada said that the acquisition of *dharma* by a son depends on doing what he owes to the departed parents.

6. Nārada then went away and when he was gone, the king asked the ministers:

7. "What did Nārada say about the departed father. I have not understood what he meant by the words 'doing what he owes to the departed parents' ".

8. The ministers knew and they told him that what was meant was a pilgrimage and it is a debt that we owe to the manes.

9. The king immediately decided to undertake a pilgrimage.

10. He decided to go to Mathurā and spend there the four months of the rainy season.

11. When the king went there, all the different tīrthas began to consult one another.

12. "It is not possible for us to fight with this Vimati. Let us all go to Kalpagrāma where lord Varāha remains".

13. All the tīrthas, O Earth, went to Kalpagrāma where, by accident, I was in the form of the boar. All of them stood before me.

The tīrthas said:

14. Victory to you, O Lord Viṣṇu, victory to you, O Acyuta, victory to you, O Lord of the worlds, we all bow to you.

Varāha said:

15. Praised by the tīrthas, O Earth, I spoke to them; "Seek of me whatever boon you have in mind".

The tīrthas said:

16-17. O Lord Varāha, you should give us protection from this sinful Vimati who is a source of fear for us. Check him if you wish us happiness.

Varāha said:

18. "For the sake of all of you, tīrthas, I shall kill this great enemy". Then I went to the city of Mathurā for the purpose.

19. When the haughty king came there, I engaged him in battle and hit him down with the divine sword, and in that process the tip of the sword pierced the earth.

20. When the sword was drawn out from there, a clod of earth was removed, and there gods and sages made a tīrtha which came to be known as Asikuṇḍa (being the *kuṇḍa* 'pit', formed by *asi* 'sword').

21. I shall tell you about the wonder there pleasing to the mind and ear.

22. People who go there with full control of the senses on Dvādaśī or Caturdaśī never fail to get whatever they desire.

23. Having gone to Mathurā then, I remain there facing west.

24. Four golden images have also been installed in the Varāhatīrtha in Mathurā. They are all beautiful and he who sees them gets liberation.

25. One is Varāha, the other is Nārāyaṇa. The third is Vāmana and the fourth Rāghava.

26. He who bathes in the Asikuṇḍa and sees these four images gets the merit equivalent to going round the earth upto the four oceans.

27. He also gets the fruit of all tīrthas in Mathurā.

28. Asikuṇḍa is the most important of all tīrthas there. As regards the order of the tīrthas for the pilgrim told to you earlier, it is good to start it from Asikuṇḍa.

29. Even the man who bathes in Asikuṇḍa on Dvādaśī day after waking from sleep and sees the images there, becomes eligible for final liberation.

30. Even after a long lapse of time, he will not be born again.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYSEVEN

The power of Viśrānti tīrtha

Varāha said:

1. O goddess, listen to me. I shall tell you what the Rākṣasa said about Viśrānti tīrtha to the Brahmin.

Earth said:

2. Tell me why the Rākṣasa spoke about Viśrānti tīrtha and why the Brahmin asked about it.

Varāha said:

3. In Ujjayinī there was a Brahmin who never cared for the rules of virtuous life. He never worshipped gods and never bowed to the saints.

4. He never bathed in any holy tīrtha. He knew neither the Vedas nor the Vedāṅgas. He was lustful and longed for the wives of others.

5. He used to sleep during dawn and dusk. He never gave the honour due to superior men and never did anything to propitiate the manes.

6. His mind was wicked, deeds sinful and his company bad. He was always immersed in the pleasures of conjugal life.

7. To discharge the duties of a householder is, of course, proclaimed to be a virtuous action and that all beings are sustained by that.

8. Just as all beings depend on the mother, so too they depend on wedded life.

9. So (when he felt the need for more money to maintain his family) he began to steal, and when once he was running in the night, he was caught by the king's sentinels.

10. He ran away from them, but while doing so, fell into a well and died. He then became a Rākṣasa of terrific form.

11. A caravan of traders happened to pass by that place.

12. Amidst them was a Brahmin who was protecting the entire group by uttering the Rakṣoghna mantra (meant to drive away Rākṣasas).

13. Then the Rākṣasa came to the Brahmin and told him:

14. "O Brahmin, I shall give you whatever you need. Don't deprive me of my food which I have got after a long time.

15. Get up from here and go and sleep somewhere else. Let me eat my food (these men) to my heart's content".

16. Hearing these words of the Rākṣasa, the Brahmin said: "I have come along with this group and I shall not forsake it.

17. This caravan is to be looked after by me like my wife. You may, therefore, go away from here. You will not be able to see it because of the power of my mantra."

The Rākṣasa said:

18. "By depriving me of my food you will be doing a great wrong. Please take pity on me and don't stand in the way of my food".

19. Then the Brahmin asked him about the particular misdeed as a result of which he had become the Rākṣasa.

20. Then he told him about his previous life and how by the violation of the rules of virtuous life he was turned into a Rākṣasa on death.

21. Then sympathising with him, the Brahmin said, "O Rākṣasa, you have become my friend now. So tell me what I may give you and what I may do to be helpful to you".

The Rākṣasa said:

22-23. If you are pleased to grant me my wish, then give me the fruit of your bath at Viśrānti tīrtha in Mathurā so that I may gain release from my present state.

The Brahmin said:

24. How do you know, O Rākṣasa, about the Viśrānti tīrtha. Tell me how it got the name.

The Rākṣasa said :

25. "I was living in the city named Ujjayinī and once I happened to go to the temple of Viṣṇu there.

26. There a Vaidika Brahmin was discoursing on the greatness of Viśrānti tīrtha.

27. By listening to it, devotion set in in my mind. I also came to know how it got the name.

28. Janārdana, the great lord of the worlds, reposes there. Hence it got the name Viśrānti".

29. Hearing these words of the Rākṣasa, the Brahmin said: "I give you the merit of one bath there".

30. As he was saying this, the Rākṣasa attained release.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYEIGHT

The Tīrthas in Mathurā

Earth said:

1. Tell me who is this Kṣetrapāla who guards Mathurā and what merit is obtained by seeing him.

Varāha said:

2. By the very sight of this lord of beings in Mathurā, all sins disappear.

3. Śiva performed penance of a severe nature for thousand years, at the end of which I appeared before him and asked him to seek a boon.

4. "O Lord of gods, I know for certain that you are everywhere. Give me a place in Mathurā".

5. Hearing these words of the great god, Hari said:

6. "O god, you will be the Kṣetrapāla in Mathurā. To see you will beget the benefit of the whole kṣetra. Otherwise there will not be fulfilment.

7. Whatever good deed is done in this tīrtha, its full benefit will be derived through you.

8. The very entry into this place is capable of removing *saṁsāra*."

9. This city is beautiful like Indra's Amarāvatī in heaven.

10. In this earth, Mathurā is most dear to me. The Mathurā region extends over twenty yojanas and at every step there, the fruit of Aśvamedha is obtained.

11. O Earth, I have not told this great truth to Brahmā or Śiva. I have been keeping it as a great secret.

12. In this region the city of Mathurā is splendid with gems and jewels, I shall tell you about the tīrthas there.

13. They are sixty crores and sixty hundreds in number. I shall give the names (of a few).

14. Govardhana, Akrūra, Dakṣiṇakoṭī, Uttarakoṭī,

15. Praskandana and Bhāṇḍīra. These six are equal to Kurukṣetra.

16. This most holy Viśrānti, Asikuṇḍa and Vaikuṇṭha are equal to Koṭitīrtha, Avimukta, Somatīrtha, Yamunā, Tinduka.

17. Cakratīrtha, Akrūra, Dvādaśāditya. All these are very holy and remove all sins. Mathurā is hundred times more holy than Kurukṣetra.

18. Those who read this account of the greatness of Mathurā or listen to it with attention, attain supreme bliss.

19. They liberate two hundred and forty generations.

20. He who calls this to mind at the time of death, snaps all *saṁsāra* and gets Supreme bliss.

21. I have thus told you about the greatness of these tīrthas. What else do you wish to know?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTYNINE

The Semicircular spot in Mathurā

Varāha said:

1. There is no place greater than Mathurā in all the three worlds. So I remain in Mathurā for ever.

2. Mathurā is the greatest of all tīrthas because Kṛṣṇa was playing in every spot there.

3. The whole place is circular and half of this circle is particularly important.

4. People who live between the northern and southern ends of this attain liberation.

5. This is Somacakra because of its appearance and it is efficacious for bath and gifts. Death there also is desirable.

6. He who bathes in this Ardhacandra (semicircular spot) reaches the world from which there is no return.

7. By simply following the law of the sacred thread, one may start from the south and go to its north.

Earth said:

8. O Lord, what is the law of the sacred thread. Tell me how it should be followed.

Varāha said:

9. O goddess, the law of the sacred thread is that the commencement should be in the south and conclusion in the north.

10. This is the law by which people are able to gain salvation.

11. One should start from home and silently go to the north and have bath there.

12. Then one may break silence and perform worship to Kṛṣṇa.

13. A milch cow may then be gifted and also gold and other things. Then Brahmins should be fed. This is that law.

14. One can also get these things done there for the sake of getting the results.

15. Such a person is never born again but remains esteemed in my world. He who dies there also goes to my world.

16. Those who die elsewhere also go to my world if they have done these things in Ardhacandra.

17. They remain in heaven as long as their bones remain in Ardhacandra.

18. In this Ardhacandra in Viśrāntitīrtha even a donkey becomes a four-armed person after it is cremated.

19. I remain as Garteśvara between the two ends of this place.

20. O Earth, I remain in the form of the people of Mathurā. I am satisfied when they are satisfied.

21. Listen, O goddess, to what happened to Garuḍa when he came to Mathurā to see Lord Kṛṣṇa.

22. He found all people there to be like Kṛṣṇa, and in order to know the real Lord Kṛṣṇa among them, he uttered this stotra:

Garuḍa said:

23. "Victory to the Lord of the universe, victory to Āditya, victory to Viṣṇu, victory to Acyuta, Victory to Kṛṣṇa, Victory to him who is beyond thought. I bow to you, O Lord."

24. When praised thus by the great Garuḍa, the lord appeared before him.

25. He consoled him and said to him pleasantly.

26. "Why have you uttered this praise ? What do you desire ? Why have you come to Mathurā ? Tell me all this."

Garuḍa said:

27. "I came to Mathurā wishing to see you. But I was unable to see you.

28. I find here all of the same appearance and so I am stupefied. Hence I uttered this praise for your favour".

29. Hearing these words of Garuḍa, the lord laughed and told him in sweet words;

Kṛṣṇa said:

30. "The form of the people of Mathurā is my form. The sinful people never see them in that form".

31. So saying Kṛṣṇa disappeared there. Garuḍa also returned.

32. I have thus told you about the form of the people of Mathurā. Their propitiation is my propitiation.

33. Those who die in Mathurā attain salvation, and this will never be otherwise.

34. An animal, a bird or even a worm, all attain there the four-armed form.

35-36. He who fasts on the Ekādaśī day in the month of Āśvina, and on the Dvādaśī day bathes in the river Yamunā and sees Padmanābha and the deities Śiva and Viṣṇu united in a single form, ceases from rebirth.

37. He who bathes there on the Dvādaśī of the bright half, after fasting and keeping awake the previous day, and worships Viṣṇu, surely gets salvation.

38-39. He gets freed of the sin of killing a Brahmin by praising Yaśodā, Devakī and Vidyeśvarī.

40. Bath there removes all the evil effects of the planets, so too the prayer there to whatever deity.

41. Seeing the Lord as Dīrghaviṣṇu there is itself efficacious, and worshipping him yields all results.

42. This place itself is called Brahmā and doing all that Brahmā did there like japa, homa and dhyāna well, takes one to Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY

The story of Gokarṇa

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, I shall now tell you an old story about Gokarṇa in Mathurā.

2. There was a wealthy Vaiśya named Vasukarṇa in Mathurā. He had a very virtuous life named Suśīlā.

3. She was very much devoted to her husband, but did not have a child even after many years.

4. Once seeing many women with children, she was wailing over her unfortunate lot at the confluence of the river Sarasvatī.

5. Seeing this, a sage who was sitting at the foot of a tree there, took pity on her and asked her who she was and why she was sad.

6. She told him that when she saw there numerous women playing with their children, she was feeling sorry that she alone had not that good fortune.

7. The sage then told her who was yearning for the blessing to get a child:

8. "By the blessing of God, you will get a son. Go to the Śiva temple known as Gokarṇa.

9. Worship there with your husband offering abhiṣeka, lamp and naivedya, reciting stotras and performing Japa".

10. Hearing this, she prostrated before him and went to her husband to tell him about the agreeable advice of the sage.

11. He told her that he very much liked the idea and felt that his long-felt desire was bearing fruit.

12-13. He went with her to the confluence of Sarasvatī and bathing there, worshipped Gokarṇa every day with flowers, lamp and naivedya.

14. Ten years passed like this. Then Lord Śiva became pleased with them and said:

15. "You will get a handsome and virtuous son and he will be getting many children by the blessing of God".

16. So said by the Lord, they bathed in the Sarasvatī early in the morning and made many offerings to the Lord.

17. They gave to the Brahmins a lot of food, clothes and liberal dakṣiṇā.

18. Signs of pregnancy could then be discerned in Suśīlā. The foetus was growing like the moon in the bright fortnight. In the tenth month was born a boy delightful like the moon.

19. To celebrate the birth of the son, the father gave numerous cows with gold and clothes to people of all castes.

20. He performed the Jātakarma ceremony of the new-born and also the Nāmakaraṇa naming the boy Gokarṇa after well thinking about it.

21. In due course, he performed for his son the other ceremonies like Annaprāśana, Cūḍākarma, Upanayana, Godāna and Vivāha at the appropriate times.

22. He gave numerous gifts, worshipped many deities and and performed several auspicious ceremonies.

23. But seeing him not getting children even in the prime of youth, he got more girls married to him making them four in all.

24. All of them were lovely, good-natured and in the bloom of youth, but none bore a child.

25. Gokarṇa started doing many things conducive to get a child like digging wells, making tanks, constructing temples,

26. Stalls for giving water and garlands, daily food, special feasts and such other things.

27. Considering the evanescent nature of human life, he always engaged himself in such activities.

28. Near Gokarṇa, on its western side, he constructed a temple of Viṣṇu in the Pañcāyatana.

29. He arranged for an extensive garden around it with all kinds of flowering plants and trees like mango, orange and pomegranate.

30. Around this he constructed a big wall with a moat and made provision for watering the plants and collecting flowers by women.

31. Every service in the temple including cleaning, was done by his wives.

32. All of them were devoted to him and faithfully carried out whatever he said.

33. A garland maker was appointed to water the trees and he was guarding the garden also.

34. In due time, the trees produced flowers and fruits and presented the appearance of an eternal festival of fruits. They were eaten by all and given to others also as in the garden of Indra.

35. While he was thus living in Mathurā making lavish gifts, his resources gradually began to dwindle.

36-37. He began to get worried as to what he could do with the little that was left with him to look after his parents, maintain his family and feed his servants.

38. So he started his trading business again and started with his employees to the eastern regions.

39. Purchasing things from there, he sold them in the northern regions with good profit.

40-41. He then bought from there fine gems, horses and clothes and brought them home in Mathurā. This business was continued.

42. Once during a trip like this, he and his people halted

for rest in a mountain valley with fine water and profuse growth of barley.

43. In a convenient place near a brook, they put up their tent, deposited their luggage there and let loose the horses for grazing.

44. He gave the necessary instructions to the followers, and with a few of them climbed up the mountain which was full of caves.

45. While he was strolling there for pleasure, he noticed a spot which was full of placid water amidst groves of oranges.

46. There were many trees laden with fruits and many plants full of flowers grown by the flowermakers therein between rocks.

47. As he went near and scanned it with his eyes, he heard words of welcome.

48. Surprised at this, he looked more carefully and saw there a parrot in a cage.

49. The parrot said: "Come here, let me accord you welcome and be hospitable to you, O wayfarer. Receive this water for pādya and take this honoured seat.

50. You and your people may partake of these sweet fruits, honey, meat and water as much as you like.

51. My parents will come and offer you further hospitality.

52. The ancestors of a householder, who is indifferent to duly receive guests, go to hell and those of one who respects them, go to heaven.

53. A guest who goes away disappointed, takes with him the merit acquired by the householder transferring to him all of his own sins.

54. So a guest should be attended upon in all seriousness irrespective of the fact whether the time of the visit is suitable or otherwise, for a guest is like Viṣṇu."

55. The merchant Gokarṇa was very happy to hear these words of *dharma* from the parrot, and he asked him.

56. "Which sage are you ? or are you a god or semi-divine that you appear superhuman and utter these words of wisdom ?

57. Please tell me who you are. You are enthusiastic and eloquent about guests. Surely blessed is the man near whom you are".

58. So requested, the parrot began to tell him about an improper action foolishly done by it.

59. "I happened to offend sage Śuka when he was performing penance on the northern side of mount Sumeru.

60. Śuka, the son of Vyāsa, was performing great penance and to hear the Purāṇas and Itihāsas from him, many sages came there.

61. There were among them the sages Asita, Devala Mārkaṇḍeya, Bharadvāja, Yavakrīta, Bhṛgu,

62. Aṅgiras, Taittirīya, Kaṇva, Medhātithi, Kṛta, Tantu, Sutantu, Āditya, Vasumān, Ekata, Dvita,

63. Vāmadeva, Aśvaśiras, Triśiras, Gautama and many Devas, Siddhas, Pannagas and Guhyakas.

64. They all sat before Śuka and asked him many questions relating to *dharma.* I was a disciple of sage Vāmadeva, by name Śukodara.

65. Curious to know things but not observing the necessary decorum, because of my being young, I went in front and repeatedly put questions of a hypothetical nature.

66-67. My master was stopping me every time saying that the objections are raised and the answers given by those who want to win a point over each other and it was not proper to interrupt them by my questions.

68. Thus chastised by my master, the other sages refused to speak to me.

69. And Śuka pronounced a curse on me: "As this boy blabbers like a parrot, let him become the parrot itself".

70. No sooner did he utter this, than this Śukodara was transformed into a Śuka (parrot).

71. The sages then sought the pardon of Śuka on my behalf, but he only said:

72. "What I said cannot but happen. But I shall give this parrot a boon to redeem himself after a lapse of time.

73. Because of your pleadings, I give him the power to be highly virtuous and get mastery of all Śāstras and get knowledge of the essence of Purāṇas even while remaining in the form of the parrot.

74. He will die in Mathurā and then go to the Brahmaloka".

75. Having incurred such a curse and getting the boon for redemption from it, I was living in despondency in a cave in the Himālayas.

76. I was then caught by a hunter and put in a cage, and he and his wife keep me as a plaything.

77. But by the grace of the sage, my knowledge does not leave me. I eat the fruit of my own bad action".

78. At these words of the parrot, Gokarṇa said: "O great soul, don't give yourself up to sorrow.

79. I belong to that holy Mathurā from where you are to gain redemption. I happened to come here on my way for trade.

80. I will be going back to Mathurā with all my merchandise soon. (I shall take you with me as my son)".

81. The parrot was happy to know that Gokarṇa was a resident of Mathurā and he agreed to the suggestion of the merchant that he would take him as his son.

82. When they were conversing thus, the huntress woke up and came out. She saw the handsome man sitting in the seat surrounded by his followers.

83. As she was looking at him again and again,the parrot said:

84. "Mother, here is a distinguished guest for us. He is named Gokarṇa and deserves to be well honoured".

85. As she was hesitating in spite of what the parrot said, the hunter returned home.

86. The parrot repeated the importance of honouring guests and the hunter agreed.

87. He offered him fruits, meat and sweet-smelling honey and then asked him what he might do for him.

88. But Gokarṇa said that what he desired was something else, and that may be given to him if he was willing.

89. He said: "Please give me the parrot in the cage as my son. I will take him to my parents at Mathurā".

90-91. Immediately the hunter said: "I shall give you the parrot if you are prepared to give us the fruit of the bath in Yamunā and in the confluence of Sarasvatī".

92. Gokarṇa replied: "Tell me, if you know, the result of the bath in the confluence of Sarasvatī".

The hunter said:

93. This parrot has told me about the merit that accrues in Mathurā, in the confluence and in performing Dvādaśīvrata.

94. He who performs this vrata, let him be a Rākṣasa or even an animal, attains final beatitude.

95. He who bathes in the confluence and sees Lord Gokarṇa there, never goes to the abode of Yama, but goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

96. Thus have I heard about the great merit that accrues in the confluence (Saṅgama).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYONE

The Story of Gokarṇa (continued)

Varāha said:

1. He took the parrot and went to Mathurā and presented him to his parents, telling them the whole story about him.

2. Many years passed happily in worship and discussions (of morals).

3. His resources again began to dwindle and he thought of starting trading again.

4. His idea was to collect gems from the sea through experts.

5. He then entered into an agreement with a troupe of sailors and started.

6. On an auspicious day together with the parrot and taking with him all the necessary food and drink.

7. Before entering the ship, he got the blessings of his parents and instructed his wives to do their duties in the temple and to look after the garden.

8. He asked them to attend well on the parents all the time without fail and to do for them what would be normally his duty.

9-10. Instructing them thus and getting their approval and propitiating God, he entered the ship together with the parrot and started voyage in the vast ocean.

11. The sailors moved the craft rapidly into the deep outer ocean.

12. Then an adverse wind began to blow which drifted it away and made the crew helpless and senseless.

13. "What a pity ! what can we do now", they exclaimed. Hearing their words, those on board began to accuse one another.

14. "Some sinful man who ought not to have entered the ship has got into it", they said. "Because of his sin we are all facing death now".

15. Four months passed and they observed the fruit of their adventure.

16. Listening to their mutual accusations, Gokarṇa asked Śuka who was in a self-disparaging mood.

17. "O my son, I am burning within myself because I am the sinner among us, as I have no (real) son and it is wellknown that the man without a son has no salvation.

18. Tell me out of your wisdom and proficiency in scripture what we may do in this predicament."

Śuka said:

19. "O father, be quiet. Don't have any fear and don't give yourself up to sorrow. Leave me to do what is appropriate in this situation."

20. Consoling his father thus, Śuka quickly flew in the northern direction to the region called Dhruva.

21. He crossed the expanse of water by flying low and reached the valley of a mountain spreading over one yojana.

22. He was thrilled to see the big mountain, and flying to its top, saw a fine temple.

23. It was a splendid temple of Viṣṇu, and after going around it, he hid himself within.

24. He thought, "I am the son, the father is now a wanderer. When will we be able to get over the present difficulty ?"

25. As he was thinking for a moment in this manner, the (chief) goddess entered there with a golden vessel in her hand and performed worship of the god.

26. She uttered 'Bow to Nārāyaṇa' and sat on a seat. In a moment there came numerous (other) goddesses similar to the chief goddess in age and beauty.

27. After delightfully presenting there vocal music, instrumental music and dance, they returned to their places.

28. On the southern side in the temple could be seen many flocks of Jaṭāyu birds.

29. Śuka, the parrot, entered into an understanding with them, as if in written form, and spoke in his language seeking their protection.

30. They consoled him and asked him how he came there crossing the expansive ocean full of all kinds of fish.

31. Śuka said; "My father remains in the craft drifted away to a difficult place by an unfavourable wind.

32. Desiring to seek protection for him I have come to this great mountain. Please see that he is safe and happy".

The birds said:

33. We shall see that this good desire of yours is accomplished. You will get your father as if by a canoe.

34. I will split the water with my feet (and make a shallow passage across the ocean) and your father will follow on my back.

35. The aquatic beings that come in the way will die by my beak pushing them down".

36. The plan was conveyed to the father, and he was made to cross the ocean on the back of Jaṭāyu.

37. While crossing, the water was in some places waist-deep, in others chest-deep and in yet others neck-deep.

38. He then reached that wonderful temple and saw there the tank full of gems and lotuses. He bathed there and offered libations to the gods and manes.

39. He collected flowers and worshipped Lord Keśava. After seeing the Pañcāyatana studded with gems, he sat in solitude with the approval of Śuka.

40. In a short time, the goddesses made their appearance as before, and after the dance, the seniormost among them spoke to the rest.

41-42. "To this Gokarṇa, the visitor who is great and spiritual, give the celestial fruit for eating and fine water for drinking so as to get him satisfaction for three months and his sorrow, sin and delusion disappear".

43. They did so and said, "Live in this heavenly place as long as you like, you will be free from fear and sorrow".

44. This continued and Gokarṇa was as happy as in Mathurā.

45. Meanwhile (as Gokarṇa was just leaving the craft),

a favourable wind blew and took it to a place of calm water full of gems.

46. His men collected a good deal of gems, and as they were taking them to him for his examination, they found him missing.

47. They were extremely sad and said, "Where has he gone? Is he dead or lost in water ?

48. Or has he drowned himself out of shame ? Any way we shall go to his father and move with him as if we are his sons.

49. We shall also give him the share in the gems due to him. This is the rule when we venture jointly as a group."

50. But Gokarṇa, who was in that island, was full of sorrow and he piteously spoke to Śuka about his parents.

51. Śuka, however, spoke to him, "I am but a bird with a frail little body, and, as such, I am unable to carry you.

52. I shall go to Mathurā across this sea and convey to them your words and convey back to you theirs. Give me your permission".

53-54. Gokarṇa then said to Śuka, "Let it be so. May you go to my parents and tell them about me. But return soon as I can't do without you."

55. The parrot said 'yes', and reaching Mathurā told everything to the parents (of Gokarṇa).

56. They heard all that but, however, presumed Gokarṇa as dead and wailed for a long time. Then they put affection on the parrot and said:

57. "O bird, you should narrate for our peace of mind stories up-holding *dharma*."

58. Distressed at the loss of the son, they were consoled by stories uttered by the parrot remaining in the cage.

59. Then the sailors (who had gone with Gokarṇa in voyage) returned with their collection of gems and gave to Vasukarṇa what was due to his son.

60. The mountain was worshipped by them by offering twenty gems each. They were all then duly honoured and sent to their homes.

61-62. They lived there attending to the needs of the old Vaiśya (Vasukarṇa) as if he was their own father.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYTWO

The Story of Gokarṇa (continued)

Varāha said:

1. Gokarṇa did in the temple for (the other) thirteen days (in the fortnight) what he did on the first day.

2. The goddesses, beautiful and well ornamented, used to visit there and happily perform their dance.

3. Gokarṇa soon forgot everything about his home. Then once he saw the goddesses coming there to be devoid of their usual lustre.

4. They were weak and pale, without their attractive garments and jewels, and with the hair on the head and eyelids reduced.

5. They were deformed and disfigured and had several bleeding wounds. He was very much pained to see them in that condition.

6. He felt that, being an issueless man, not only he himself will have no salvation, but by his association even these goddesses were reduced to that state.

7. Thinking so, he asked them to tell him how such a change occurred in their form.

The Goddesses said:

8. "O noble man, don't ask about this. Fate is the cause for everything. In the form of Time, it gives us the effects of our merits (as well as demerits).

9. Fate should be sought after for an answer. People who are very much distressed do not talk with one who is himself distressed."

10. Gokarṇa, however, out of a desire to know the truth, bowed to them and asked again.

11. "If you consider the cause of this disfigurement a secret and are not inclined to tell me about it, I shall put an end to my life."

12. When he told them thus, one among them said, "Let us tell him about our sorrow if that will give him relief.

13. I shall tell you how this disfigurement happened to us. Listen with attention.

14. There is the beautiful city of Mathurā which brings about salvation to people.

15. Once the king of Ayodhyā went there with all the four components of his army to worship in the tīrthas there for four months.

16. He chose there the temple of Viṣṇu with its five parts and having gardens and arbours around with wells and sweet-smelling flowers and trees bearing fruits in all seasons.

17. The king arranged his residence near this.

18. His followers destroyed the garden with its fruit-bearing trees and the surrounding walls were razed to the ground.

19. Although prevented from doing this, these sinful people did not listen. The king felt himself like a lion in a cage".

20. She then covered with the hands her face shedding tears on the breast and cried aloud, "Alas ! who will protect us".

21. Then all of them began to cry, and hearing their wailing sound resembling the cry of the Kurari birds, Gokarṇa became very sad.

22. He fell down at the feet of every one of them and slowly consoled them with soothing words.

23-24. He then told them that if he had been there, he would have prevented the king himself from being there, but unfortunately he was incapacitated.

25. When he said this, all of them became curious and asked him who he was and from where he came there.

Gokarṇa said:

26. "I am Gokarṇa. I told you I was happy to see you all formerly very beautiful.

27. But now you are all otherwise and that gives me grief. Tell me the cause of this transformation".

28. The eldest among them said, "We were well decorated with various flowers because we were in that garden protected by its owner.

29. Therefore you could see us beautiful with all those flowers. I shall tell you how the change occurred.

30. The king's men tormented us by their cutting and up-

rooting (the garden). We became miserable and hence the present appearance.[1]

31. We are without flowers, left but with the root and trunk. Thus are we reduced with loss of our identity.

32. The god who is shaped there in stone and clay, but who is really of the nature of Sattva, is the witness of all good deeds.

33. It is meritorious to water well the garden and to dig ponds and make them full of lotuses and swans.

34. The trees laden with fruits are (to be considered) golden To protect the garden is to provide pleasure to people. To destroy it is to do harm as the disfigurement of ours."

Gokarṇa said:

35. Tell me what kind of merit accrues to a person who makes a garden, digs wells and instals images of gods.

The eldest said:

36. For the twice-born, *iṣṭāpūrta* is the foremost means of *dharma*. Heaven is acquired by *iṣṭa* and liberation by *pūrta*.

37. He who renovates tanks, wells, ponds and temples gains the result of *pūrta*.

38. The same world as is ordained for those who make gifts of land or cows, is attained by one who grows trees.

39. He who plants a peepal, a margosa, a banyan, ten flowering plants, two pomegranates, two oranges and five mangoes never goes to hell.

40. Just as a dutiful son raises his family by hard effort and austere resolve, so do the trees with their flowers and fruits, raise up from hell their planter.[2]

41-42. The service of the trees in providing firewood, sticks for sacrifices like Agnihotra, shade for the travellers to rest, nests for birds and medicine for men through the leaves, root and bark is said to be its five sacrifices (*pañcayajña*).

43-44. The learned people declare a tree to be like a son because it provides materials for domestic life, provides shelter

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1. This indicates that the goddesses were nymphs of the garden (*Udyānadevatās*).

2. The text has after this 'Gokarṇa said', but this seems to be wrong.

for small animals, twice in a year birds breed in it and it provides fruits to the originator throughout the year.

Varāha said:

45. When told thus by the goddess Mālatī, he swooned saying 'Alas, Alas !'

46. They brought him back to consciousness by sprinkling water on him and sought to know why he swooned.

Gokarṇa said:

47. "In Mathurā I have my aged parents and four wives. The garden and the temple you speak of are mine.

48. If I am able to go to my parents and see the king I shall tell them what has befallen you".

49. The eldest goddess said, "I shall take you wherever you like. We shall see Mathurā today itself.

50. You may get into this aerial vehicle. You may also take with you these celestial gems, jewels and fruits and present them to the king without *arghya*".

51. He agreed and, bowing to Lord Viṣṇu there, got into the vehicle and soon descended at the place where the king was camping.

52. He then presented to the king the numerous gems he had brought with him.

53. The king was very much pleased even at their sight. He welcomed Gokarṇa, showed him hospitality and honoured him by giving half his seat due to a donor of gems and money.

54. Gokarṇa then offered to show him a wonder and also explain about it.

55-56. He agreed and asked his commander-in-chief to get ready the army soon.

57. The commander-in-chief carried out the orders of the king[1]. The deformed goddesses attained their original celestial form.

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1. After this the portion relating to what was done seems to be lost. Presumably it is about the king being taken to the deformed goddesses to convince him of the misdeeds of his men and then making him restore the garden and renovate the temple.

58. They praised Gokarṇa again and again. They gave him boons and bestowing benedictions went to heaven.

59. Gokarṇa then told the king all about himself and of the result of *Pūrta dharma.*

60. The king then bestowed on him some villages, cities, clothes, elephants, horses and abundant money.

61. Having known how great a dharma the making of a garden is and how wonderful its results are, the king did everything in that realm.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYTHREE

The story of Gokarṇa (continued)

Varāha said:

1. Remaining in that auspicious place, Gokarṇa honoured the parrot Śuka, his own parents and the four wives.

2. He then made the residents of Mathurā make gardens according to their capacity.

3. He himself then conducted a great sacrificial festival in which Brahmins were fed and gifts given every day.

4. He also provided for vocal song and instrumental music and did everything conducive to progeny.

5. He then prostrated separately at the feet of his father and mother.

6-7. Then looking at Śuka he shed tears and exclaimed: "It was because of your favour that I got my life, dharma and introduction to the path of salvation and the king gained profound merit".

8. Living happily with his family and friends, Gokarṇa constructed this temple of Śiva and named it Śuka.

9. He installed Śukeśvara (Śiva) there and then constructed the resthouse named 'Śukasatra' where two hundred Brahmins are sumptuously fed.

10. Śuka died there, and entering an aerial car went to heaven.

11. Gokarṇa had given to the hunter, in exchange for the parrot, the merit of his bath at the confluence and the Śrāddha and gift of gold and cows there.

12. (As a result) the hunter and his wife also entered the same aerial car as Śuka's and went to heaven.

13. Thus have I told you about the great merit that accrues at Mathurā, at the confluence of river Sarasvatī and Yamunā and at the temple of Śiva Gokarṇa.

14. The meditation on Gokarṇa confers great merits, enormous enjoyment and salvation in the end.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYFOUR

The greatness of the confluence of Yamunā

Varāha said:

1. I shall tell you another thing about the prowess of Saṅgama (confluence) which gains liberation even for the sinners.

2. An ascetic Brahmin by name Mahānāma was living in a forest there.

3. He had mastered yoga and was spending his time in reciting Veda, practising Japa and performing Homa.

4. In performing these with the idea of attaining Brahmaloka, many years passed.

5. He then thought of undertaking a pilgrimage and cleansing his body by the holy tīrthas.

6-7. His idea was to purify himself by starting early morning after the prescribed rites and first go to Asikuṇḍa, from there to Koṭitīrtha in the south and then proceed to the northern end bathing in all tīrthas including Mathurā and Puṣkara.

8. So he started from Mathurā and took the proposed route after performing worship and saluting the Lord.

9. Soon he came across five ghosts in the lonely forest full of thorns.

10. They were all terrific in appearance and so he became afraid for a moment and closed his eyes.

11. Soon he gave up his fear, and mustering courage, asked them:

12. "Who are you, O fierce beings? By what bad action have you become like this? Where have you come from and where do you go?"

The ghosts said:

13. We are full of misery and hunger and thirst overcome us. Our minds are bad and knowledge we have none.

14. We do not know the quarters or the subquarters, neither the sky nor the earth nor even the day.

15. We hope that this suffering of ours will ultimately lead to good and it is like darkness awaiting the rising of the sun.

16. I am by name Paryuṣita, this one is Sūcīmukha, these are Śīghraga and Rodhaka and the fifth is Lekhaka.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

17. How can the ghosts, who become so because of their own actions have names? Please tell me how you have got these names.

The ghost said:

18. O Brahmin, I used to eat well during the whole day and give what is left over (*paryuṣita*) to the Brahmins (the next day). Hence my name is Paryuṣita.

19. Many Brahmins who were seeking food were directed (*sūcita*) wrongly by this man. Hence he is Sūcīmukha.

20. This one used to go away quickly (*śīghraṁ gacchati*) whenever a Brahmin made any request to him. Hence he is Śīghraga.

21. For fear of other Brahmins asking food, this one used to take food in the interior of the house. Hence he is Rodhaka (since he stopped others *rudhyati*).

22. This (last) one used to remain silent scratching the earth (likhan) in indifference. Hence he is Lekhaka.

23. Lekhaka moves about like an inebriate; Rodhaka has his head bent down.

24-25. Śīghraga is lame and Sūcīmukha (has a deformed face)[1] Paryuṣita has become one with thin limbs, long neck hanging big belly and stout testicles. I have thus told you all about us. You may ask if you want to know anything else.

1. The appearance of Sūcīmukha is not given.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

26. All beings in the earth need food. I wish to know what food you take.

The ghosts said:

27. O kind man, listen to what I say about our food, by knowing which you will despise us.

28. The ghosts eat phlegm, urine and faeces before women and in houses which are unclean.

29-30. The ghosts eat in such houses where there are no offerings to gods, no recitation of mantras and no gifts, where the elders are not respected, where women are dominant, where things are kept haphazard and where there is always quarrel.

31-32. We eat in homes where gifts are given to the undeserving or given without due rites, where contemptible Brahmins live, where bad and prohibited actions are done.

33. Such is the food for us who have done bad deeds. We are extremely dejected with this ghosthood. Please tell us how we can cease to be this.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

34. A man who undertakes vows like Kṛcchra and Cāndrāyaṇa for a single day or three days, gets purified and never becomes a ghost.

35. He who gives ample food and drink with due regard and honours ascetics, never becomes a ghost.

36. He who nurtures every day five, three or even one (being) with universal compassion, never becomes a ghost.

37. He who is inclined to worship gods and honour guests, elders and parents, never becomes a ghost.

38. He who has conquered anger, does not enter into rivalry, is free from avarice and attachment, is full of forbearance and is prone to give liberal gifts, never becomes a ghost.

39. He who fasts on the Ekādaśī, Saptamī and Caturdaśī days during the bright as well as dark halves of the month, never becomes a ghost.

40. He who bows to the gods, Brahmins, cows, tīrthas, mountains and rivers, never becomes a ghost.

The ghosts said:

41. We have now heard from you about the factors that are conducive to make one not to become a ghost. Please tell us what factors make one (necessarily) become a ghost.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

42. He who dies with the food given by a Śūdra within him, becomes a ghost.

43. By mere contact of, not to say sitting together or eating with, Nāgas (a naked sect), Kāpālikas or Pāṣaṇḍas, one becomes a ghost.

44. Such a person loses all his acquired merit and becomes condemned to be a ghost for ever.

45. He who remains in the abode of a Pāṣaṇḍa or is a drunkard, or cohabits with the wife of another, or is fond of flesh, becomes a ghost.

46. He who steals the wealth of gods, Brahmins or teachers or gives away his daughter for money, becomes a ghost.

47. He who gives up his mother, father, brother, sister, wife or son, when they are innocent, becomes certainly a ghost.

48. He who performs sacrifices for the sake of those who are not eligible for it and refuses to do the same for those who are eligible, and who is interested in serving Śūdras, becomes a ghost,

49. He who kills a Brahmin or cow or incurs the five great sins or is ungrateful, becomes a ghost.

50. He who does not heed the advice of an elder or preceptor meant for his well being, becomes a ghost.

51. He who receives gifts from bad people, particularly atheists, becomes a ghost without food or drink.

The ghost said:

52. Please tell us how those who do such prohibited deeds out of ignorance can redeem themselves.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

53-54. The only means of redemption for those who are ignorant and indifferent to *dharma* and do not have compassion or give gifts, is to perform worship and sacrifice to Lord Vāmana at the confluence at Mathurā when the star Śravaṇa is in combination with Dvādaśī in the month of Bhādrapada.

55. They should make gifts of gold, food, clothes, umbrella and sandals after bathing and giving libations to manes.

56. They not only do not become ghosts, but go to the world of Viṣṇu in an aerial car.

57. He who bathes in that tīrtha or thinks or speaks about it, gets the merit equivalent to bathing in river Gaṅgā.

58. I have heard it proclaimed that even he who, having become a ghost, listens to the narration of the prowess of this tīrtha, goes to the immortal world of Viṣṇu.

The ghosts said:

59. O auspicious man, tell us details of the rites of this vow so that we can do it and get redemption from this ghosthood.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

60. The details of this vow were formerly narrated to Māndhātā by Vasiṣṭha being asked about them.

61. I shall now tell the same to you since they are capable of securing your release.

62. Whatever bath, gift or sacrifice done in Bhādrapada when Śravaṇa falls on the Dvādaśī day, is a lakh of times more efficacious than at other times.

63. You may know the merit that accrues when the gift of a pot is made after bathing in the confluence and worshipping Vāmana.

64. It is the same as what is obtained by making gifts of a hundred cows with gold and all decorations.

65. By this Śravaṇadvādaśīvrata one not only never becomes a Rākṣasa, but takes abode in heaven for the duration of the period of fourteen Indras.

66. Then he is born as a Brahmin learned in the Vedas, proficient in Yoga, always following the path to *mokṣa* and conscious ofhis previous life. And by contemplation he becomes permanently liberated.

67. Gifts of gold, food, drink and jewels should be made there.

68. According to one's means a golden Vāmana may also be gifted along with umbrella and sandals according to rules.

69. After performing worship in the prescribed manner with mantras and also homa, the Brahmins may be propitiated.

(These are the items in worship:)

70. (Invocation): O lord of Lakṣmī, Eternal being, giver of gifts, although you are everywhere, be pleased to adorn this seat by your part for my favour.

71. (Reference to the star): I adore for the attainment of my desires that star in which form you shine in the sky on Dvādaśī day.

72. (Bath): I bow to you (and bathe you), O Keśava, you having lotus in the navel and forming the abode of Lakṣmī.

73. (Salutation): I salute you, O eternal and omniscient Lord Nārāyaṇa, the source of the whole world. (Worship): O Keśava, accept this worship of mine on this day when the asterism Śravaṇa is in conjunction with Dvādaśī day.

74. (Incense): O Lord of Lords, bearing the conch, disc and mace, here is the incense. I bow to you Vāsudeva, Acyuta, Ananta, Govinda.

75. (Lamp with flame): By this incandecense may all the eternal worlds be opened. O Janārdana, you are the lustre in everything and I bow to you.

76. (Food): You were born to Aditi as Vāmana for subduing the son of Virocana (Bali) and you then occupied the entire universe with three steps. I bow to you.

77. (Arghya): You are esteemed by the gods and you are the final resort of yogins. You repose in water and you are the source of the universe. Be pleased to accept this *arghya* (ceremonial water).

78. (Homa): You eat the sacrificial offering, you produce the sacrificial offering, you are the sacrificer and the sacrificial offering. O Keśava, I bow to you who are everywhere and permeate every being.

79. (Dakṣiṇā): O Lord, you are gold, food, water and cloth. (Umbrella and Sandals): O Janārdana, be pleased with this offering of sandals and umbrella.

80. (Praise): May the eternal Lord who is wind, water and fire, Varuṇa, Sūrya, Keśava, Śiva, Kubera, remove my sins.

81. (Gift of water pot): He who is Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Candra, Sūrya, Indra, Tvaṣṭā, Yama and Agni, remove my sins.

82. (Reference to the worshipper): Vāmana is the giver of intelligence, Vāmana is the liberator. I bow to Vāmana.

83. (Receiver of gift): I give to Vāmana, Vāmana gives me. Vāmana is the liberator by both these means. I bow to Vāmana.

84. (Gift of cow): In the body of the cow remain the fourteen worlds. By giving a gift of the cow which yields all desires, people get gratification.

85. (Release): I offered worship to you, the dispeller of all my sins. I now release you after this worship to adorn any other place you like.

86. He who performs in this manner the worship on the Dvādaśī day in the Bhādrapada month, attains his aim.

87. He who performs like this in the Sarasvatī tīrtha at the confluence of Yamunā in particular, gets the merit a hundredfold.

88. Giving up everything, I have also been resorting to this tīrtha all this time with intense devotion. That was why you were not able to affect me.

89. The Vrata should be commenced when the tithi Dvādaśī actually starts combination with the star Śravaṇa and continues till one of the two is out of combination.

90. The prowess of the tīrtha is becoming manifest now itself. I find that your listening to this account has itself started gaining your liberation.

Varāha said:

91. As the Brahmin was saying this, the sound of Dundubhī could be heard in the sky and a shower of flowers from the sky on earth in hundreds.

92. Aerial cars descended there for the ghosts. A messenger of the gods then told them:

93. "By the narration of (the prowess of this tīrtha by) the Brahmin and his extollation of its efficacy and by your listening to all this, you are released from your ghosthood."

94. So conversation with a good man even with effort is a highly desirable thing, and in the mind there should always be the thought of the tīrtha and attitude of the Vrata.

95. This is evidenced by these ghosts getting their release and going to eternal heaven by their contact with the man who was always in the tīrtha at the confluence of Sarasvatī.

96. The result of their simply listening to the account of the greatness of the tīrtha was their release. So this which brought about the liberation of the five ghosts, is a great *dharma*.

97. He who devoutly recites this or listens with serious attention or performs what is ordained by this, never becomes a ghost.

98. The tīrtha named Piśāca is known in all the three worlds and simply to know about it is to safeguard against becoming a ghost.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYFIVE

The prowess of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā and Kāliñjara

Varāha said:

1. O fair one, now listen to the prowess of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā in river Yamunā.

2. Sage Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana (Vyāsa) used to bathe here thinking of Gaṅgā and do his daily routine.

3. Kṛṣṇagaṅgā is between the tīrthas Soma and Vaikuṇṭha. In this place in Mathurā, Vyāsa performed penance.

4-5. In this hermitage where there were many other great sages also, many sages used to go to perform Cāturmāsya and also many scholars deep in the knowledge of Vedas to clear their doubts.

6. Vyāsa used to clear their doubts by citing the relevant passages (from scripture).

7. In that place Śiva is installed with the name Kāliñjara, the very sight of whom confers the merit of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā.

8. Vyāsa lived there for twelve years free from all attachment, eating but once a fortnight and that too fruit in the new moon and full moon days.

9. He then went to Badarī in Himālaya and entered into dhyānayoga and became endowed with the knowledge of the past, present and future.

10. The greatness of this tīrtha was known through intuition by a Brahmin of the Pāñcāla country.

11-12. His name was Vasu, but being stricken by poverty, he proceeded with his wife to the south and settled in a town on the right bank of Śivanadī.

13. While living there pursuing his Brahmanic way of life, five sons and a daughter were born to him.

14. In due course, the daughter was given in marriage to a Brahmin with the necessary grain and wealth, but he passed away.

15. She then collected his bones and went to Mathurā, having known, by hearing the Purāṇas, that one whose bones are put in the Ardhacandra tīrtha gets a permanent place in heaven.

16. She went to Mathurā undertaking a pilgrimage and following a group of traders.

17. The youngest of the Brahmin's children thus became a young widow.

18. She was fair-complexioned, had wellformed limbs and curly black hair. Her thighs were stout and like the stem of the plantain.

19. Her fingers were close together and so too the toes and her nails rosy, her navel right-whirled and the belly had the three folds.

20. Her belly was small and even and breasts well rounded and raised. Her neck was conch-like, mouth tight, teeth sparkling and the lips and chin attractive.

21. Her eyes and brows were beautiful, speech extremely sweet. Her entire body was well proportioned. She bore the significant name Tilottamā.

22. Whoever was looked at by her, became dumbfounded by her beauty as if drawn in a picture.

23. As she was spending her days bathing in the tīrtha once she came to be seen by a group of courtesans.

24. The king of Kānyakubja, an upholder of Kṣatriya dharma, had constructed a permanent inn near the Śiva temple Devagarteśvara.

25. He had endowed it with a lot of wealth and entertainments with music and instruments as in Indra's abode.

26. Repeatedly induced by these courtesans attached to this

temple (for music and dancing), she took to music and dancing and gradually fell into their way of life.

27. In a short time, the virtuous woman became surrounded by the vicious.

28. As the consort of god, she began to enjoy with all those that came to her.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYSIX

The Prowess of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā and Kāliñjara

Varāha said:

1-2. The youngest of the five sons of the Pāñcāla Brahmin was rich and handsome and he started with his men and merchandise for trade in different countries.

3. After trading in various places, crossing different kingdoms, mountains and rivers, he came to the city of Mathurā and put up his tent in a place where food and fuel were plentiful.

4. He took bath early in the morning in that tīrtha together with his men and dressing and decking himself well, proudly drove in his cart.

5. He saluted the deities and gave many gifts.

6. Then out of curiosity he visited the temple of Garteśvara and, seeing there the supremely charming Tilottamā, fell a prey to passion.

7. To her matron he respectfully gave many clothes and hundreds of beautifully designed bangles.

8. He gave her also many jewelled chains and the essence of Agaru with camphor and sandal.

9. In that house (where Tilottamā was living) he was spending his time every day and used to go to his camp only after the sun had risen high in the horizon.

10. But everyday he would bathe in the tīrtha in Kṛṣṇagaṅgā. Out of the pride of wealth he was continuing in this way and six months passed.

11-12. Once when he went there to bathe, he was seen by sage Sumantu, who was in his hermitage nearby, to be full of worms all over his body.

13. These worms used to fall in plenty till he took bath, but the moment the bath was taken, they disappeared and he became handsome again.

14. This wonder was noticed by Sumantu for many days and he wanted to know who this youth was.

15. He then boldly asked him who he was, who his father was and what he was engaged in day and night.

Pāñcāla said:

16. I belong to Pāñcāla. I am the son of a Brahmin. I have taken to trading business.

17. I have come from Dekkan to this Mathurā and spending the night in my camp, I come to this tīrtha in the morning.

18. After bath, I worship this Lord Śiva named Trigarteśvara and also Kāliñjara and your feet and then return to my camp.

Sumantu said:

19. "I see a wonder in your body everyday. I find it full of worms before bath but clean after bath.

20. You have unknowingly incurred some great sin which is kept afar by the power of this tīrtha.

21. And by the contact of Kāliñjara, the body becomes pure also.

22. Think well and tell me what can possibly be the cause of this sin now unknown to you. Seeing the power of this tīrtha, I am asking this for your good".

23. Hearing these words of the sage who knew the past, present and future, he could not say anything and simply went away.

24. When he was alone with Tilottamā, he asked her:

25. "O dear, please tell me who you are, whose daughter, to which place you belong and why you are living here like this, though happily".

26. Although he pressed for an answer, she did not speak a word. He repeated the request several times but she was mum.

27. A few days passed and then he threatened to give up his life if she still refused to say the truth.

28. Compelled thus, she told him about her parents, brothers, native place, relations and the family (of her husband) to which she belonged.

29. "There is the beautiful city of Pāñcāla on the northern bank of river Gaṅgā. My parents were living there.

30. During a famine which caught hold of the entire country, they moved to Dekkan and settled on the southern bank of Narmadā in a town full of Brahmins.

31. Five sons were born to them there and a daughter as the sixth. That daughter is myself and I became a widow.

32. The youngest of the five brothers, but elder to me, left home even while he was a baby with a view to earn and make himself rich.

33. When he was gone, the parents died. I came here with a group of traders to put the bones in this tīrtha.

34. I used to spend my time here bathing in this tīrtha and worshipping the gods and Brahmins. Then I was lured by these (courtesans) and transformed to my present state.

35. By resorting to prostitution I have traduced my family. By this sin of mine I have brought to hell twentyone persons in both the families".

36. Telling him all this, Tilottamā cried for long thinking of her once high family.

37. She cried in the night thinking of her own doings.

38. Hearing her cry, the other women there came to her and asked her why she was crying and spoke words of consolation.

39. By then, hearing her story, the Pāñcāla too fell down unconscious and the women stood around and consoled him too and brought him back to consciousness by their efforts.

40. Seeing him revive, they asked him why he fell down unconscious.

41. He then said all about himself and his great family in detail before those associates of Tilottamā.

42. He became much dejected at his having committed inadvertent incest and thought seriously about the expiation for it.

43. If a Brahmin incurs the sin of killing a Brahmin or drink-

ing liquor, the expiation ordained by the sages is the destruction of the body.

44. The only purification for the guilt of incest with mother, teacher's wife, daughter, sister or daughter-in-law is immolation of the offender in fire.

45. He who cohabits with a prohibited person falls into the same category as the killer of the Brahmin, drinker of liquor, the murderer of women and the offender of the chastity of the teacher's wife.

46. Knowing her paramour to be her own elder brother, that woman from Pāñcāla (feeling herself guilty) gave away all her ornaments to Brahmins.

47. She gave them also all her jewels, clothes and grain. She gave these also for adorning Kāliñjara and for (the maintenance of) the garden.

48. Then at the tīrtha in Kṛṣṇagaṅgā she arranged a pyre in the prescribed manner and blazed the fire for her own purification.

49. The Pāñcāla too decided to do similarly for himself.

50. He took his bath, bowed to the gods and saluted sage Sumantu. He then sat before him and performed rites relating to his death.

51. He called the people of Mathurā and gave them gifts liberally.

52. He purchased villages then and there and made them over to Brahmins. He asked them to recite the divine Īśāvāsya (upaniṣad).

53. He entrusted with them money for the maintenance of the rest-house and for conducting his obsequies.

54. Then bathing in that tīrtha of Kṛṣṇa and bowing to the Lord, he endowed funds for the worship of Kāliñjara, for the rest-house and for the temple and gave the necessary instructions in the matter to his own people.

55. Then he held the feet of the great Sumantu and said: "O sage, your knowledge is wonderfully divine and exhilarating.

56. My sin has been now proved to be the consequence of incest.

57. From the time I came to Mathurā, I was having sexual contact with my sister and I have thus done great harm to my family.

58. By your pure sight, O sage, you were able to see worms falling from my body but the body becoming clean again by the power of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā.

59. All this was seen by you and I was asked about it again and again.

60. The sin of incest suspected has now been confirmed and for purification from that sin I am now giving up this body. I bow to your feet. Please give me approval."

61. When he was about to enter the pyre blazing with the ghee poured on it, an aerial voice was heard to say:

62. "Don't do this rash deed since you both have become free from the sin, for redemption from which you have decided to immolate yourselves.

63. This place where Lord Kṛṣṇa had played and walked about with his feet marked by the disc is pure and equal to Brahman.

64. A sin committed elsewhere disappears in a tīrtha, but a sin committed in a tīrtha sticks close like *vajralepa* (cement concrete).

65. Since both of you were bathing in Gaṅgā saṅgama (you are freed from your sins). By bathing here even once, a man becomes free even from the sin of killing a Brahmin.

66. The same merit as is acquired by bathing in all other tīrthas on earth, is acquired surely by bathing in five tīrthas.

67-68. Bathing in Viśrānti on Ekādaśī day, Saukara on Dvādaśī, Naimiṣa on Trayodaśī, Prayāga on Caturdaśī and Puṣkara on the new moon and full moon days in the month of Kārttika removes all sins.

69. Among these five tīrthas in Mathurā, Viśrānti is the most important.

70. But the same result as is obtained by bathing in these tīrthas or in Asikuṇḍa in the river Sarasvatī or in Kāliñjara, is obtained tenfold by bathing in Kṛṣṇagaṅgā.

71. Whatever sin is incurred knowingly or unknowingly disappears in Mathurā, so too all merits and demerits."

72. This narration of the greatness of tīrthas made by Varāha to Earth is capable of removing all sins.

73. Varāha combines in himself all gods and Vedas. He has no end and he cannot be fully known.

74. How can we speak fully of this god in whom the entire space is covered by but a part of his ear ?

75. The entire heat (as well as light) in the world is covered by the corners of his eyes.

76. The whole of Air is covered by his breath and the seven oceans by the tips of his hoofs and look like particles of sweat there.

77. The whole Earth that was lost is seen clinging with the mountains and forests in the roots of his hair. Who is greater than this god ?

78. In order to protect tīrthas he has taken his form himself.

79. And this is the Purāṇa narrated by him for clearing the doubts of Earth.

80. There need be no doubt that the moment he is seen, every sin disappears.

81-82. By bathing in (Kṛṣṇagaṅgā) on Navamī day in the bright half of the month Jyeṣṭha and in Sūkara for three days and then giving a lamp according to capacity, one gets rid of all sins.

83. By bathing in Kāliñjara on Dvādaśī day and worshipping god, one ascends an aerial car bright like twelve suns, and accepted by Viṣṇu, remains esteemed in Viṣṇu-loka.

Varāha said:

84. Thus comforted by the divine voice, the Pāñcāla asked Sumantu:

85. "O sage, you are my preceptor and father. Tell me what I may do, to enter this fire or resort to this tīrtha.

86. May I perform for three days expiatory rites like Kṛcchra and Cāndrāyaṇa in this place rendered more holy by your feet and get salvation ?

Sumantu said:

87. The aerial voice we heard is true. It can never be false.

88. I was able to perceive the sin in your body before bath every day and its recession after bath.

89. You remain in this hermitage free from sin for the rest of your life. This sister of yours, who has also been freed from her sin, will surely attain salvation.

Varāha said:

90. O Earth, such is the prowess of this tīrtha in Mathurā.

91. The greatness of the tīrtha in Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, Kāliñjara and Sūkara is as I narrated to you.

92. He who listens to this with attention or recites it in the morning, will never be touched by sin.

93. The sin committed in seven lives disappears and the merit of giving a hundred cows is acquired.

94. Heaven is reached and immortality attained.

C HAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYSEVEN

Consecration of Sūrya by Sāmba

Varāha said:

1. O fair goddess, now listen to another deed of Lord Kṛṣṇa, when while living in Dvārakā, (his son) Sāmba got a curse.

2. When Kṛṣṇa was living there with his wives and sons, once Nārada stepped in.

3. Kṛṣṇa offered him pādya, arghya, āsana, madhuparka and cow according to the usual etiquette (in receiving a distinguished guest) and began to converse with him.

4. But Nārada took Kṛṣṇa aside and spoke to him in private.

5. "I have to tell you something in secret. Please listen. Your son Sāmba is young, eloquent and handsome and is longed by all the women here.

6. The Supreme God gave you these sixteen hundred divine women for your pleasure.

7. Their minds get agitated (with love) when they see Sāmba, and this (scandal) has spread even in Brahmaloka.

8. O great god, I have come here to apprise you of this. Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa) has a significant verse relevant here, namely,

9-10. "By (proper) deeds one gets residence in heaven, and by its reverse residence in hell; the result of meritorious actions spreads all over the earth and the doer becomes the Puruṣa indes-

tructible, unchanging and eternal and the opposite of this puts him in hell, so say the wise."

11-12. By calling Sâmba and all this multitude of women and seating them here, I shall show you whether what I say is true or false.

13. Then seats were spread for all of them and they were called and seated in groups.

14. Then Sāmba entered with folded hands and waited to know the command (of Kṛṣṇa).

15. Seeing the exceptionally handsome Sāmba, all those noble women felt agitated in mind even when Kṛṣṇa was watching them.

16. Then Kṛṣṇa asked these beloved women of his to get up and go to their homes and they did so.

17. Sāmba stood there shivering with folded hands. Looking at Nārada, Kṛṣṇa bent down his face in shame.

18. He then told Nārada in detail about the nature of women and their conduct leading to sin.

19. "They have no consideration of time, of secrecy of what they do. Still they pass to be virtuous.

20-21. Women irrespective of their age, whether they be girls, teenagers, middle-aged or advanced in age, get their passion excited at the sight of a handsome man. O great sage, this is natural to them.

22. As for Sāmba, he is dignified, bright, virtuous and good. His excitement is only because of his beauty."

23. Nārada fully agreed with Kṛṣṇa in what he said, but knowing more about the working of the mind, made a remark that led to the curse of Sāmba.

24. "A chariot does not move," (he said), "with a single wheel alone. It is only with the response of men do women get excited with passion. They get gratified by the looks of men.

25. Seeing (your other son) Pradyumna, they become highly shy.

26. But by seeing Sāmba, they become stricken with passion and the sandal paste and such other things (on his body) act as additional excitants.

27. So Sāmba must be held responsible for ruining your women and you cannot obliterate the scandal that has reached even Satyaloka.

28. I hear again and again from the people and the sages (the opinion) that you should give up Sāmba to save you from the ignominy affecting your family.

29. O great Lord, I have told you what is good for you". After saying so, Nārada remained quiet.

30. Kṛṣṇa then cursed Sāmba to become ugly and immediately he became a leper.

31. Foul-smelling blood began to ooze from his body which became full of wounds.

32. Then Nārada spoke of the means of redemption from the curse also namely the worship of the Sun.

33-34. "O Sāmba, son of Jāmbavatī, listen to me. Prostrate before the Sun uttering Vedas, Upaniṣads and the like when he rises in the eastern mountain. The Sun will be pleased in this way (and get you out of this curse), not otherwise."

Sāmba said:

35. "O sage, how can the Sun-god become pleased with a person who has committed a prohibited sexual contact ?"

Nārada said:

36. By your discussion of this, there will arise a Purāṇa by name Bhaviṣya. I will read this in Brahmaloka before Brahmā himself, and Sumantu will impart it to Manu in the world of mortals.

Sāmba said:

37. You have suggested a remedy for my present distress, but how can I go to the eastern mountain when I am reduced to the state of a mere mass of flesh ?

Nārada said:

38. The result that is obtained by worshipping the Sun-god at the eastern mountain is obtained by worshipping him at Ṣaṭsūrya in Mathurā.

39-40. Worshipping him there in the noon and evening confers even a kingdom.

41. Reciting the mantras of the Sun in the morning, noon and evening at Mathurā, one gets all sins removed.

42. By worshipping the Sun after bathing in Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, all sins disappear and so also all diseases like leprosy.

Varāha said:

43. Then at the bidding of Kṛṣṇa, Sāmba went to the city of Mathurā which brings about salvation, for worshipping the Sun.

44. He worshipped the rising sun at Ṣaṭsūrya according to the rules given by Nārada.

45. Then, by yogic power, the Sun appeared before Sāmba and asked him to seek a boon for his good and for the establishment of the Sūryavrata.

46. "Recite before me the fifty ślokas strung with expressions from the Vedas with which I was propitiated by Nārada. I am pleased by your worshipping me".

47. He was then touched by the Sun-god and soon he regained his wellshaped form and appeared like another Sun-god.

48. The Sun then taught Sāmba the sacrifice of Yājñavalkya called 'Mādhyandinīyaka' to be performed at noon whence he is Madhyandina.

49. There is the tīrtha Mādhyandinīyaka on the western side of Vaikuṇṭha (tīrtha). To bathe there and see Mādhyandina is to get free from all sins.

50. The all-pervading Sun remained with Sāmba in the morning and evening, and in the evening he stood on the southern side of Kṛṣṇagaṅgā.

51. To see the Sun there in the morning and evening is to get removed of all sins and to attain Brahman.

52. Thus appearing before Sāmba by splitting himself by the power of yoga from the sky, the Sun removed leprosy which was afflicting him.

53-54. Sāmba disappeared in the tīrtha, but was riding with the Sun in his chariot day and night and asking him about the Purāṇa spoken by him.

55. He then propagated this Purāṇa known as Bhaviṣya.

56. He then consecrated Sūrya in the rising form at Udayācala to the south of Yamunā, in the fully brilliant form at noon at Kālapriya and in the setting form at Astamanācala in Mūlasthāna.

57. Thus he consecrated Sūrya in his three forms pertaining to morning, noon and evening.

58. O Earth, in Mathurā too he established a place known after his name as Sāmbapura, according to Purāṇic rites.

59. He arranged there (the festival of) Rathayātrā as suggested by the Sun.

60. On the Saptamī day in the month of Māgha people conduct Rathayātrā there, giving up all opposites in their nature.

61. They go to the abode of peace in the regions of the Sun.

62. I have thus told you the sacred story relating to Sāmba's curse and release, which removes all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYEIGHT

Śatrughnalavaṇa

Varāha said:

1. The fierce Lavaṇa was killed by Śatrughna (in Mathurā) for the protection of Brahmins.

2. O fair one, he who recites the account of Śatrughna, fasting on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, and propitiates Brahmins with sumptuous food (gets his desires fulfilled).

3. By Śatrughna's killing of Lavaṇa, the great Rāma was extremely pleased.

4. To celebrate this victory Rāma came there from Ayodhyā with his retinue.

5-6. And Śatrughna at Mathurā fasting on the Ekādaśī day in the bright half of the month Āgrahāyaṇī, bathed in the Viśrānti tīrtha and performed the festival together with the whole family and propitiated the Brahmins with food.

7-8. He who performs this festival on the same day in the year, gets rid of all his sins and delights for long with his forefathers in heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTYNINE

Expiations for Offences

Earth said:

1. O great Lord, by committing offence to you, one becomes guilty even if otherwise not so, and is despised by Vaiṣṇavas.

2. Tell me by what acts of expiation he can get the fruits of his worship.

Varāha said:

3. "People who are sinful in thought, word and deed (commit offences). Eating the tooth-stick, eating the king's food,

4. Sexual intercourse, touching a dead body, passing motion, passing urine, sight of a woman recently delivered or during her monthly course and touch of such a woman.

5. Obscenity in speech, eating oilcake, wearing red garment, another's cloth, soiled cloth, or coloured blue with indigo,

6. False compulsions on elders, eating the food of an outcaste, eating prohibited items of food, boiled rice or myrobalan,

7. Keeping good food for oneself, eating the goose or crane, entering the temple wearing sandals,

8. Using prohibited flowers during worship, performing worship without removing the previous day's flowers or in dim light or darkness,

9. Drinking liquor, rousing the Lord in darkness, non-prostration before the Lord at the close of worship.

10. These are the thirtythree offences (connected with worship), O Earth. He who is guilty of these will never see Lord Viṣṇu.

11. The prostration should not be performed from a long distance, because then it will be like the worship by the Rākṣasa.

Taking in *pañcagavya* for one day, two days or three days, bathing along with the dress worn are the expiations in order for the offences commencing with wearing soiled cloth.

12. For the offence of using indigo, rubbing with cowdung is to be done. The offence of wearing cloth dyed with indigo is removed by the rite Prājāpatya.

13. The offence to an elder (or preceptor) can be removed

by performing Cāndrāyaṇa twice. If the food of the outcaste is eaten, both Cāndrāyaṇa and Parāka should be performed.

14. If prohibited food is eaten, Cāndrāyaṇa, Parāka and Prājāpatya should be performed and the gift of cow and food should be made in addition.

15. He who enters the place of worship wearing sandals, gets purified after fasting for five days and taking in *pañcagavya.*

16. One-fourth of a Kṛcchra and fasting for two days will be the atonement for bathing the deity and doing other items of worship without the prescribed flowers. For the offence of performing worship without removing the previous day's flowers is bath in *pañcāmṛta.*

17. For the offence of drinking liquor by the twice-born, the expiation is four Cāndrāyaṇas and three Prājāpatyas for twelve years.

18. Purification is also obtained by Brahmakūrca, gifting of three cows on a single day and by taking in *pañcāmṛta.*

19. By reciting the hymns of Viṣṇu also, one gets free from the effect of offences. I have thus told you about this important matter. What else do you wish to know ?"

20. Lord Janārdana said this again and again, but Earth seemed to be falling into a swoon.

21-22. She soon recovered and said: "Knowing about the offences starting from the sight of the recently delivered woman and the numerous expiations to be done by people, I was really lost in sorrow and stupor.

23. Is there any means by which you get propitiated in the same manner as by these rites of expiation ?"

Varāha said:

24. Bathing after due fasting in the Śaṅkara tīrtha in Gaṅgā in the middle of the year, removes the effect of offences, similarly in Mathurā.

25. He who resorts to these two tīrthas gets rid of the effect of offences he has done in a thousand lives.

26. The sins disappear by bathing there, by drinking the water there, by carrying it, by speaking about it or thinking about it, also by hearing about it and seeing it.

Earth said:

27. Both Mathurā and Śaṅkara are dear to you. Of these two, tell me which is the greater.

Varāha said:

28. Among the tīrthas of the world extending upto the ocean, Kubjāmraka is considered the most important by my devotees.

29. The Saukaratīrtha is a crore times more efficacious than that.

30. There is Sītātīrtha which is sacred to the Vaiṣṇavas on Dvādaśī day in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa. In Purāṇas this is known as Gaṅgāsāgara.

31. Even more important is the Mathurā region which is half a parārdha more efficacious than Sītātīrtha.

32. Whatever sin remains even after visiting tīrthas like Kubjāmraka, disappears quickly on reaching Mathurā.

33. The name Viśrānti (rest) is significant because the pilgrimage comes to a close there.

34. The best place for those who seek release is Mathurā.

35. Release is obtained without Sāṅkhya or Yoga in Kubjāmraka, Saukara and in Mathurā in particular. The same effect as the one obtained by a Brahmin practising yoga is obtained by dying in Mathurā.

36. I have thus told you the truth in essence. There is no tīrtha greater than Mathurā and no god greater than Keśava.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY

Greatness of Dhruvatīrtha in Mathurā

Varāha said:

1. I shall now tell you a story about Dhruvatīrtha which propitiates the manes.

2. In this city there was a valiant, virtuous and magnanimous king named Candrasena.

3. He had two hundred young and noble wives among whom was one, Candraprabhā of an ascetic turn of mind, although the mother of valiant sons.

4. Among her hundred attendants, there was one named Prabhāvatī. The manes for whom obsequial rites were due from her (servant) had not got the Ekoddiṣṭa ceremony done.

5. Their number exceeded a hundred and they all fell into hell because of this.

6. And it is well known that this sort of mixture leads to hell as it violates the rules of the family.

7. Then thrown out from there, all of them came to Dhruvatīrtha as a cluster of minute beings, black in colour and resembling mosquitoes.

8. They were seen there by the sage Trikālajña who was mainly living on water and taking food only once in three days.

9. He was observing the vow of silence and was following the course of the sun, but at that moment he was stupefied and did not perform japa.

10. While he was looking at them with compassion and curiosity, three quarters of the day passed.

11. Some manes came to the earth from the sky, others from the north, east, south and west.

12. Some were happy by themselves, some were made happy by their sons and they all went upwards with nourished bodies, pleased and satisfied.

13. They had all small bodies and they were interested in bath and penance. They had good dress and decorations and were moving about in groups in delight.

14. There were others who were naked but nourished.

15. Still others returned as they came and came back again. Some came in various kinds of vehicles and others came on birds.

16. Some returned after pronouncing benedictions and others pronouncing curses in anger.

17. Some who came famished returned well-fed in Śrāddha.

18. The sage rose up after seeing all this as if it was a festival and when the manes were gone, their sons returned home with their wives.

19. Soon Dhruvatīrtha became desolate. But in one remote corner there was a puny being, very much famished and unable to move.

20. It was shivering, its eyes had gone low and belly much depressed. Its feet were mere skeleton. Its voice was feeble like that of a tiny bird.

The sage asked:

21. Who are you that look so mutilated and surrounded by these mosquitoes?

22. Having come here you don't attempt to return. Tell me about what you have done.

23. My daily routine in this tīrtha is badly affected as I was stupefied at the sight of these numerous beings of various sorts here.

24. Seeing you in this form, my attention was turned towards you. Tell me with confidence all about you. I shall do you good.

The being said:

25. "The greatest means of propitiation for the manes is the performance of Śrāddha in Dhruvatīrtha and offering of water with sesamum.

26. Manes who have sons go to heaven being propitiated with sesamum. I am famished for want of such a thing.

27. Due to the guilt of mixture of caste, I fell into hell and have been there for a hundred years hoping against hope.

28. I have no means to go from here. Those who were propitiated with śrāddha and libations by their sons went to heaven. What way is there out for one like me?

29. Those who have a line of progeny, get propitiation from their sons and attain liberation.

30. The manes of King Candrasena were propitiated today, and, O Trikālajña, you saw them going to heaven with your divine eye.

31-32. You saw here what happened to the manes of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras and the performance of Śrāddha by Śūdras, the progeny of *hypergamous* and *hypergampous* marriages."

33. Thus he said to the Brahmin the cause of his remaining there. The sage then spoke to him in curiosity.

34. "Due to fate you have no proper progeny. If I can do

anything to help you to get out of your present state, please tell me".

35. Remaining in that despicable condition surrounded by the manes, he said:

36. "The emaciated mosquitoes that cover my body remain so due to the lack of progeny. I am the slender thread for them to hold on.

37. In the palace of Candrasena at the centre of the city, there is the servant of the queen by name Prabhāvatī.

38. She too has a servant by name Virūpanidhi.

39. She is the continuing thread in our progeny and we are eagerly awaiting for the śrāddha to be performed by her for us.

40. All this long time we have been spending in this water and now we have to return to hell because of our own deeds".

41. Hearing this Trikālajña was baffled and said: "How can the libation offered by a lowborn woman be of any use to you ? By what rule can she be your proper issue?"

42. Hearing this, he told the learned and merciful Trikālajña:

43. "People desire to have sons because even when they fall down (in hell), they are raised up and sent upwards by (the proper actions of) the son.

44. The manes have the service of the son done, if they perform śrāddha, libation of piṇḍa and gifts on normal as well as special occasions. They have no other way.

45. Howmuch do we wish that at least one among our progeny gives us libation !

46. Standing in waist-deep water in rivers full of cool water, and particularly at the middle of the tīrtha spot, he should offer handfuls of water together with sesamum.

47. He should do this with darbha in his hand and three times each for the manes uttering the gotra and name of each of them and saying 'svadhā' and 'may my manes be pleased'.

48. It should be known that in propitiating the gods, sages and manes (Devas, Ṛṣis and Pitṛs) the number of handfuls of water is to be respectively one, two and three.

49. In the end should be uttered the mantra *tṛpyadhvam* (may you all be pleased').

50. First should be given the three libations to the father reciting the mantras *Udīratām* etc, *Aṅgiraso* etc, and *Āyantu naḥ* etc, in order, and then to the mother uttering the gotra and name and also *svadhā* and *tṛpyatu.*

51. Then for the mother's father with gotra and name, and similarly for father's father.

52. For these the mantras *ūrdhvam pitṛbhyaḥ* etc, *Ye ceha te pitaraḥ* etc, and *Madhu vātā* etc, should be used.

53. Then it should be done for father's mother and grandmother as in the case of the mother and then for mother's father and grandfather each three times separately uttering the mantra *Namo vaḥ pitaraḥ* etc.

54. In each case utter the gotra and *Asūryān nāśayāmahe.* Offer āsana (seat) uttering the gotra and the particular Pitṛ by his name.

55. In the case of the female Pitṛs also utter the gotra and the particular pitṛ (*mātā, mātāmahī*) by name (*devī*) for āsana. Similarly for *pitāmaha* (grand-father).

56. In the saṅkalpa for *arghya,* in *piṇḍa* and in *avanejana* (pouring water over the piṇḍa) the form should be (genitive) as *gotrasya, piturmahasya* and *śarmaṇaḥ,* for females (dative) as *gotrāyai, māturmahyai, devyai.*

57. In *āvāhana* (invocation) the form should be accusative, in worship dative and in benediction nominative.

58. In śrāddha it should be genitive for *ādāna* and *akṣaya* (praying for their eternal abode in heaven). At the times prescribed for *akṣaya,* the *datta* rite should be performed for the manes.

59. The twice-born son who does this devotedly or offers even water with full devotion, leads them to eternality.

60. When the Brahmin performs Śrāddha with due attention and in the prescribed manner, the manes become happy.

61. O Trikālajña, remain quiet. We now go to Naraka (hell) to live there long because of the result of our former deeds".

Trikālajña said:

62. Among the manes I saw there in this tīrtha many were happy and many unhappy too.

63. Some received Śrāddha offered by the sons in great anxiety and some returned mum. Please tell me why this was so.

Agastya said :

64. The śrāddha performed by the son sometimes goes in vain and sometimes even leads to hell. I shall tell you, please listen.

65. What is given at the wrong place and time, given without proper rites or dakṣiṇā, or given to the unsuitable person and is impure, produces great sin.

66. The śrāddha done without the necessary attention, not in the proper form, seen by the bad, or without sesamum, mantra or kuśa grass, becomes *āsura* (demoniac).

67. It is well known that Lord Vāmana gave the fruit of the śrāddha of Śūdras to Vairocana (Mahābali).

68-69. Similarly, Rāma, son of Daśaratha, after killing Rāvaṇa, the chief of the Rākṣasas, with all army, became pleased to hear about the devotion of Rākṣasī Trijaṭā, and gave her a boon.

70-71. "O Trijaṭā, I give to you all the Śrāddha offerings done in unclean houses, those done without pādya, without oil, without food or without dakṣiṇā and the gifts given with anger although to the proper persons."

72. Similarly, Śrāddha was given to Vāsuki, the king of serpents, by Śiva who was pleased with him. I shall tell you about this, please listen.

73. "The annual śrāddha done by the twice-born without proper dakṣiṇā even if all the rituals are observed,

74. Done by one who takes false resolve in the presence of gods and Brahmins, done without the proper rites and mantras,

75. Done by one who bathes at night with the dress worn, who does not respect the teacher who imparts knowledge,

76. Done by one who propagates primitive ideals—I give to you". (So said Śiva).

77. We hear about such things from the Purāṇas and Itihāsas.

78. Śrāddha, dāna and vrata done without sincerity, never produce their results. Hence the nakedness etc., of these manes.

79. Due to such defects in the conduct of śrāddha, the manes who are invoked, do not get result and they return as they came.

80. Having come to receive, they return silently. This I say in reply to what you ask.

Trikālajña said:

81. "I have been taking food only once in three days. But even that I don't wish to take till you are satisfied. Be cheerful and await my return.

82-83. Out of compassion for you, I am giving up my routine austerities here to hasten to bring that woman here.

84. I shall see that she performs śrāddha here according to the prescribed rules."

85. So saying, the sage quickly left the place (and went to the king).

86. Seeing the sage suddenly there, the king fell down at his feet and said: "I feel honoured and favoured indeed by your coming to my home. I shall arrange for all sacrificial rites due therefore. My life is made fruitful by your presence here.

87. Here is the *pādya,* here is the *arghya,* here is *madhuparka* and here the cow. Receive them, O sage, so that my mind may rest satisfied."

88. Receiving the hearty welcome, the sage said:

89. "O king, great is the purpose with which I have come here. Do now what I ask you to do so that I may be happy".

90. Thus asked, the saintly king replied: "Please tell me that purpose so that I can see it accomplished."

Trikālajña said:

91. "Call your queen and also her beautiful attendant Prabhāvatī before me here."

92. Then came there from the harem the queen with the attendant and prostrated at the feet of the sage.

93. When they were seated, the sage said to them: "I shall tell you about something strange that happened in Dhruvatīrtha.

94. The manes from all the worlds came there and, propitiated by their sons by performing śrāddha, went to heaven.

95. There was, however, a very old one among them extremely emaciated and fatigued by thirst and hunger and surrounded by numerous minute beings.

96. He was very much disappointed and was preparing to return to hell. Then out of pity I asked him who he was and what his wish.

97. Then he told me what had come upon him as a result of his own deeds. I sympathised with him and came here.

98. Your servant's servant by name Virūpanidhi is his progeny. Please call her here."

99. The queen then sent many persons to find her out and bring her there.

100. She was found fully intoxicated and still taking meat and drink and seated on the bed with a man.

101. The queen's man caught hold of her and brought her before the sage.

102. Although she was in that drunken state, the sage told her about what she was to do.

103. "You have not made for your manes any gift libation or other ablutions. Nor have you done for them the propitiatory offering of water".

104. She said that she had not done any of these and that she did not know who her manes were and what rites she was to do.

105. When she said so, Trikālajña said, "May the king of Mathurā, with his queen and all good people in this city witness the wonder of what progeny can do to the manes".

106-107. Then all those curious people and the virtuous Brahmins were called together and the king proceeded with them accompanied by the sage to Dhruvatīrtha.

108. There, that being was seen extremely fatigued and surrounded by the mosquitoes.

109. The sage then told him, "Your descendant has been brought here for your propitiation. Do what you please".

Agastya said:

110. Let her bathe in the Dhruvatīrtha and offer libation according to the rules enunciated.

111. Let her then perform Śrāddha with dakṣiṇā, cloth and sandal-paste and give piṇḍa in veneration.

112. By making her do this śrāddha you can see me here made happy".

113. Hearing this, the queen made that servant perform śrāddha with abundant dakṣiṇā,

114. And fine cloth and good incense and camphor and sandal followed by sesamum, many kinds of food and piṇḍa.

115-116. When Śrāddha was thus done and piṇḍa offered, he attained a divine form, so too those surrounding him. He looked like a sacrificer after the concluding bath. Those in the mosquito form were transformed into handsome persons.

117. The sky was covered with aerial cars from heaven, and as he was preparing to get into it, he spoke to the sage and the king:

118. "Be pleased to listen to what I say regarding the propitiation of the manes.

119. There are many sacred tīrthas, rivers, mountains and ponds and places like Kurukṣetra and Gayā and many temples.

120. But a place like this for the propitiation of the manes, there never was and never will be.

121. From the first day in the month of Aṣāḍha till the first day in the bright half of the month Āśvina, the manes remain here enjoying the śrāddha and the piṇḍa.

122. In fact, during this period, the city of the god of death, heaven and the netherworld become practically empty since the manes flock here desiring the offerings of their son or any other descendant or brother.

123. He who performs śrāddha and tarpaṇa in Dhruvatīrtha when the sun enters the Kanyā rāśi (Virgo), propitiates sixteen generations of his manes very much.

124. We are now fully propitiated and we are all liberated. Such is the greatness of Dhruvatīrtha.

125. You have now seen the wonder of what has happened to us. By your kindness, O sage, we have become absolved of all sins".

126. Telling thus to the king, the sage, the people assembled, the queen, the servant and his own daughter, he bade them all well.

127. He then got into the aerial car and ascended to heaven surrounded by gods.

Varāha said:

128. Astonished at the greatness of that tīrtha, the king bowed to the sage and returned to his palace with his people and attendants, always thinking of Lord Viṣṇu.

129. I have thus told you, O auspicious one, about the great-

ness of Mathurā, the very thought of which removes even the sins acquired in former lives.

130. He who recites this with attention before Brahmins, propitiates all his forefathers.

131. This should not be narrated to any one who does not undertake vows, who does not listen with attention or one who does not worship Hari.

132. This is the greatest of all tīrthas, the highest of all dharmas, the most exalted of all knowledge and the best of all gains.

133. O blessed one, this should always be narrated to the meritorious devotees of the Lord.

Sūta said:

134. Earth was full of wonder hearing these words of the Lord and asked him in joy about the erection of idols.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYONE

Consecration of Wooden Images

Sūta said:

1. Having heard about this place of supreme importance, Earth asked again out of curiosity.

Earth said:

2. "How great is the prowess of this place about which you have so kindly told me ! Hearing this, I have really become free from all uneasiness.

3. But I have long been wishing to know about one secret. Be pleased to tell me that for my enlightenment.

4. That is this: How do you remain (in idols of) wood, stone or clay,

5. (In idols of) copper, bronze, silver or gold ?

6. How do you remain in (idols of) ivory.

7. O Janārdana, how do you remain in a wall (in picture) and how on earth (in pictures drawn with powers) ?"

8. Hearing these words of Earth, the Primeval Boar replied.

Varāha said:

9. First of all, the material in which the idol is to be made should be brought and the idol moulded or carved according to the rules.

10. The purification of the idol should then be made and then it should be consecrated. Worship for release from saṁsāra may be started thereafter.

11. The Madhūka tree may be used for cutting wooden idols. After consecration, it may be worshipped with the kind of sandal paste mentioned before,

12. As also with camphor, saffron, Agaru, benzoin and powder of fragrant roots.

13. The idol may be smeared with these. Svastika and Vardhamāna hymns are to be recited and Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha are to be offered.

14. The auspicious pāyasa should be offered (in naivedya). Scented wicks are to be lighted and sesamum and fruits to be offered.

15. With cleanliness, purity and devotion the worship is to be made with all that is prescribed.

16. Prāṇāyāma (control of breath) should then be made and the following mantras uttered:

17. "Be pleased to remain in this (idol made of) wood, you with the power of yoga pervading the whole world".

18. Thus consecrating the Lord in the wooden idol, it should be circumambulated together with other devotees.

19-20. A lamp should be then lit facing the idol and, without looking upwards or sideways and free from desire and anger, *Namo nārāyaṇāya* (Bow to Nārāyaṇa) should be uttered, and then reciting the following mantra, the ritual is to be performed.

21. The Mantra: "You, the most heroic of all, remain as the unfailing lord and refuge of all. O Lord of the worlds, Vāsudeva, may you by this mantra remain consecrated in this."

22. After completing the rite of my consecration, all the devotees assembled there should be honoured.

23. They should be honoured according to the prescribed rules with sandal, garlands, unguents and food.

24. O fair one, this is the way to consecrate the wooden idol. I have told this to you for the sake of *dharma*.

25. He who consecrates the wooden idol in this way never returns to *saṁsāra* but goes to my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYTWO

Consecration of Stone Images

Varāha said:

1. I shall tell you now how I am to be consecrated in stone images.

2. A beautiful, flawless stone should be selected after careful examination and a quick and clever artisan should be engaged to carve out the image. The outline may be made with a white brush.

3. After circumambulation, worship should be made with rice grains and the like.

4. Lamp should then be offered and then rice with curd. Then *Namo nārāyaṇāya* (Bow to Nārāyaṇa) should be uttered and the following mantra recited.

5. The mantra: "You are the most heroic of all, the foremost among the intelligent and effulgent like the sun, the moon and the fire. May you be consecrated here by this mantra and may fame increase. Hail, hail, great Varāha".

6. Whatever is necessary should be done with this mantra. Consecrating Lord Nārāyaṇa in this form, he should be installed facing east.

7-8. Fasting for a whole day and night, wearing white dress and white Yajñopavīta, and after cleaning the teeth, the following mantra should be uttered taking sandal water.

9. The mantra: "O Lord of the worlds, you who are the entire world with all forms, remain worshipped in this. You are always held in the mind, you are the supreme example of indestructibility, you are never defeated, you have no old age or death. Being worshipped, fix yourself here by this mantra *Om namo Vāsudevāya*.

10. After this consecration, the stone idol should be given *adhivāsana* (rest on a substratum) in the asterism Proṣṭapada.

11. He who instals me in this manner, goes to the world of Viṣṇu. There need be no doubt about this.

12. The whole day and night should be spent thus eating only wheat cooked in milk. (The next day) during the evening sandhyā four lamps should be offered.

13. At the foot of the deity four small pots containing water mixed with *pañcagavya* and sandal should be placed.

14. A festival should be conducted with vocal and instrumental music and recitation of Sāmaveda by Brahmins should be arranged.

15. I make my presence there when thousands of Vedic syllables are uttered in proper tone and tune, because, O goddess, the recitation of Vedic mantras is dear to me.

16. The idol should then be installed in the company of devotees and invocation should be made with the following mantra:

17. "Come here, O lord, with the mantras, the five sense organs and the mind. You, the dispenser, remain in all these beings".

18. With the same mantra, hundred and eight *āhutis* (offerings in fire) should be made using twigs, sesamum clarified butter and honey.

19. When all this is done, I voluntarily make my presence in the idol.

20. When the night is over and the day dawns, *pañcagavya* should be offered with mantra as prescribed.

21. Sandal, fried rice and water with *pañcagavya* should then be given and the idol installed in the temple with vocal and instrumental music and recitation of auspicious hymns.

22-23. Taking different kinds of sandal paste, the mantra should be recited: "O Primeval being, may you who have been here according to the prescribed rules, be pleased to enter this temple with all effulgence together with Lakṣmī. Bow to you again and again."

24. With this mantra the idol should be taken into the temple and placed there in the exact centre, not on the side.

25. The idol should then be erected. Sandal, saffron etc., should be applied and the following mantra should be recited:

26. "O Lord of the world, you are the foremost in the world, worshipped by Brahmā and Bṛhaspati. Remain here welcomed and saluted with mantras".

27. After installation in this manner, worship should be made with sandal and garlands. White cloth should then be offered with the following mantra:

28. The mantra: "O Lord, accept these garments given by me with devotion and put them on. Be pleased with me. Bow to you again and again".

29. Clothes should be offered to me in this way following the rules. Incense should then be offered with Agaru and saffron. While giving this *dhūpa* the following is the mantra:

30. "You are the most ancient Man, the foremost in the world and without a beginning. Accept this sandal, garlands, incense and lamp, O Lord. Bow to you again and again."

31. After this food should be offered as before.

32. For this the same mantras as before may be used. Then should be given water for cleaning.

33. Śāntijapa should then be conducted, which accomplishes all desires, with the mantra: "O Lord of the worlds, bestow peace on the king and the kingdom and on the Brahmins. Bestow peace on the infants and the aged, on herds of cows, virgins and chaste women.

34. May ailments vanish everywhere, may the farmers always get good yield. May the world be prosperous and peaceful with the rains falling in time."

35-36. After performing worship to the Lord in this manner with all the rites, Brahmins should be feasted and the poor fed according to capacity.

37. He who instals me in this way remains in my world for as many thousands of years as there are waterdrops in my body.

38. O Earth, he who does all this without any ego liberates seven, seven and seventy in his clan.

39. Thus have I told you about the installation of stone idols for the sake of *dharma* and for the good of devotees.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYTHREE

Consecration of Clay images

Varāha said:

1. I shall now tell you another thing, namely my presence in idols made of clay. Please listen.

2. The idol in clay should not have any defect or crack. It should be neither too big nor too short nor having any bend.

3. With such an idol my devotee can perform worship as he likes.

4. The clay idol may be used when one in wood or stone is not available.

5. Idols are also made in copper, bronze, silver and gold by experts for auspicious purposes.

6. My worship in the pedestal is done by some out of devotion, by others to avoid censure and by still others for publicity.

7. I am also worshipped for domestic prosperity. Even the disc which has arisen out of my effulgence may be worshipped.

8. O Earth, know that when I am installed like this and worshipped, I give all wealth.

9. With whatever aim a man worships me in proper form with mantras, I give that with pleasure.

10. He attains beatitude by my grace.

11. My devotee who is full of things to do, may please me by mental worship.

12. I will be pleased by his mere giving me a handful of water. Why should he bother about flowers, Japa and rules ?

13. I grant all desires and give divine enjoyment to him who meditates well on me.

14. I have told you all this secret incidentally.

15. My devotee who takes the clay image may perform its *adhivāsa* in the asterism Śravaṇa and then consecrate it according to the rites mentioned before.

16. Bath may be then done to the idol with water mixed with *pañcagavya* and sandal with the following mantra:

17. "O Great Lord, master of all worlds, the worlds arise out of your grace. O Acyuta, extend to me your grace and remain in the idols of clay. Bow to you again and again, the cause of all causes, the great Man beaming with great lustre."

18. By this mantra, it may be taken into the house and installed and then, as before, four pots may be placed and the following mantra uttered:

19. The mantra: "Om, the ocean having got Varuṇa was honoured with self-satisfaction. By this mantra I perform the bath and always bow with raised hands Him from whom arise fire, earth and all tastes."

20. After this bathing ritual, the devotee should worship with sandal and garlands as before.

21. He may offer incense with Agaru, camphor and saffron uttering *Namo nārāyaṇāya* (Bow to Nārāyaṇa).

22. After incense, yellow garment is to be offered uttering *Namo nārāyaṇāya* and the following mantra should be recited:

23. "The lord becomes pleased by the yellow garment, and when he becomes pleased, the whole world becomes happy. May the lord accept this garment and protect me from the bondage of worldly existence."

24. Having offered the garment with this mantra, incense and lamp should be given and then food.

25. The offering of food should be as stated before and then water should be given with the mantra.

26. (Peace should be prayed for with) the mantra: "Let there be peace for the gods, Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas. May the rain god shower rain and make the earth full of vegetation."

27. After Śānti with this mantra, the other devotees should be honoured and the Brahmins fed.

28. The devotee should prostrate before them and give them dakṣiṇās.

29. Words of maṅgala should then be recited and the deity should be released.

30. After the release, those assembled there should be honoured with clothes and decorations. The preceptor should then be honoured if union with me is desired.

31. I tell you the truth, O goddess, that if the Guru is properly worshipped, I become worshipped.

32. The king, when pleased, may grant but a village; but when the Guru is pleased, he leads one easily upto the state of becoming Brahman.

33. Therefore, in all Śāstras, the worship of the Guru is ordained in my own words.

34. He who performs my consecration in this way liberates three, thirty and seventy in his clan.

35. He remains in my world for as many thousands of years as there are drops of water falling in worship.

36. Thus have I told you, O Earth, about the consecration of clay idols. I shall tell you now another thing dear to my devotees.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYFOUR

Consecration of Copper Images

Varāha said:

1. Getting a beautiful image made of copper, it should be brought to the middle of the abode with due rites.

2. It should be placed facing north and the *adhivāsana* should be done in the asterism Citrā.

3. Bath should then be conducted with water mixed with *pañcagavya* and sandal and with the following mantras:

4. The Mantra: "You, the essence of everything, remain in copper as the eye. O, the abode of all worlds, come to this idol with the five elements."

5. After consecrating with this mantra, *adhivāsana* and worship should be done as before.

6. When the night is over and the sun rises, purification should be done with mantras of the Ṛgveda and bath should be performed with mantras.

7. The Brahmins assembled may recite the Vedas. Auspicious materials may be placed in the Maṇḍapa.

8. The devotee should then bring scented water and bathe me with the following mantra:

9. The mantra: "O Lord of worlds, you are the greatest of all with power of *māyā* and *yoga*. Be pleased to come quick for my sake and remain in this copper image. O Lord, the best of Men, fire, Sun and air, be here yourself, Om".

10. Then I should be led into the sanctum and installed on a pedestal and worship done.

11. The installation should be done with the following mantra and with sandal, flowers and lamps.

12. The mantra for installation: "Om, the light of all light, the light of the world, the embodiment of knowledge, embodiment of bliss, the lord of the universe, be pleased to come and remain here, O the best of Men, and protect me".

13. After installation in this way, white cloth should be offered with the mantra: "Om, O lord of the celestials, the pure soul, the most ancient Man, the truth of the worlds, accept these clothes. Bow to Puruṣottama."

14. After dressing me with the clothes, the devotee should perform *arcana* (with flowers).

15. After *arcana* and offering of sandal, incense etc, the offering of food should be made.

16. When the *naivedya* with delicious food is over, *Śāntipāṭha* (invocation of peace) should be made.

17. The mantra: "Let there be peace for the gods, peace for the Brahmins, peace for the kings and their kingdoms, peace for Vaiśyas, peace for boys and pregnant women. Let there be peace everywhere by your grace, O Lord".

18. After uttering this *Śānti*, the Brahmins should be honoured.

19. Then the Guru should be honoured and the Brahmins should be fed according to capacity.

20. Particularly when the Guru is honoured with clothes, decorations and food, I am worshipped and this is the truth, I tell you.

21. I am far away from him whose Guru is not pleased.

22. He who performs my installation in this way, liberates thirtysix generations in his family.

23. Thus have I told you about the installation of idols. He who does this remains in my world for as many thousands of years as there are drops in the water during the bath given to me.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYFIVE

Consecration of bronze images

Varāha said:

1-2. Getting a well-made, complete and beautiful idol in bronze, the devotee may take it into the temple to the accompaniment of song and drums and all that is auspicious.

3. Then taking *arghya* in the proper manner, the following mantra should be uttered:

4. "O Lord of the worlds, worshipped in all sacrifices, contemplated upon, the desire of the whole universe, the great soul, the master benign, may you be pleased with me and remain for worship here".

5. After this *arghya*, the idol should be placed facing north and *adhivāsana* done in the prescribed manner.

6. Then four pots should be got ready for my bath containing *pañcagavya*, sandal paste, fried rice and honey.

7-8. When the sun has set, the worshipper may perform consecration holding pots and in the company of other devotees.

9. He should utter *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* and recite the following mantra:

10. "O lord of the worlds, you are the primeval being remaining through all aeons and the dispenser for all time. You are one, you have no second. Please come and take your abode here. You are all the transformations, but you yourself have no transformation. You are the letters A, S, Ś, Ṣ. You take forms at will. The decaying, the undecaying, the sustaining, the formless are all you. Bow to you, O Puruṣottama".

11. When the night is over and the sun is rising and when the latter part of asterism Mūla is reached,

12. According to the rites mentioned before, the idol may be placed at the door-way of the Sanctum.

13. Then taking the sacred water, sandal and fruits, the devotee should utter *Namo nārāyaṇāya* and recite the following mantra:

14. "Om, You are Indra, yourself (Viṣṇu), Yama, Kubera, Varuṇa, Soma, Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Śani, Budha, Rāhu, Ketu, Sūrya and Kuja.

15. Your are herbs, waters, air, earth, fire, Nāgas, Yakṣas and quarters. Bow to you, O Puruṣottama."

16. Doing well all the rituals with this mantra, the idol may be taken into the sanctum.

17. It may then be bathed with the water with sandal kept in the pots.

18. During the bath, the following mantra may be recited:

19. "For you, Puruṣottama, may the lakes, oceans, rivers, tīrthas and wells, make their presence here by your grace for this bath".

20. I may be installed in this manner and then worshipped with sandal, incense etc, according to the materials available.

21. Then clothes should be offered as also decorations for pleasure.

22. Placing the clothes before me and prostrating at my feet, the following mantra may be recited.

23. "O lord of the worlds, I have brought here for you nice and beautiful clothes pleasant to put on. Be pleased to receive them. O Veda, Upaveda, Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda, I extol you. Bow to you, O most supreme".

24. After decoration in the manner stated before, food is to be offered as prescribed.

25. After food, water should be given, and then *śāntipāṭha* should be recited in the form of the following mantra:

26. "May all knowledge, Brahman, Brahmins, planets, rivers and oceans, Indra and other guardian deities of the quarters bring about peace. *Āyāma*, *Yama*, *Kāmadama*, *Vāma Om namaḥ puruṣottamāya*."

27. When all these *upacāras* (services) are over, circumambulation should be made and then *abhivādana* and *stuti* (praise).

28. Then the pure devotees should be honoured and the Brahmins fed with *pāyasa* and other materials.

29. Sacred water should be received from the Brahmins and sprinkled on me. Then after sending them off, worship of the Guru should be performed.

30. There is no doubt that I become worshipped when the preceptor is honoured with ring, garments and other gifts.

31. It is also true that I see to the extinction of those that condemn the Brahmins, my devotees and the preceptors.

32. He who instals me in this manner remains in my world for as many thousands of years as there are drops of water in my body.

33. He liberates every one in his paternal and maternal lines.

34. I have thus told you about the consecration of bronze images.

35. I shall tell you now about the consecration of silver images.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYSIX

Consecration of silver and golden Images

Varāha said:

1. Getting a pure, well-shaped and well-proportioned silver image, free from all defects,

2. White like the moon and radiating lustre in all directions,

3. The devotee may take it to the temple to the accompaniment of music and the sound of the conch and drums and praises and benedictions.

4. Then taking water for *arghya* and *pādya*, the following mantra is to be recited:

5. The mantra: "O lord of worlds, you who are the *arghya* in all worlds, worshipped by all and honoured by the celestials, the master of my Agnihotra done at Sunrise, be pleased to come here and receive this *arghya*. The glow residing in the middle of the sun".

6. After giving *arghya* with this mantra, the idol should be placed facing north.

7. On the day when the asterism Āśleṣā is in the Zodiacal house Karkaṭaka, when the sun has set, the *adhivāsana* should be done with mantras and in the prescribed manner.

8. Four pots filled with sandal water should be placed there with all herbs and decorated with mango twigs.

9. Then the devotees should do the rituals as instructed by the preceptor.

10. *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* should be uttered and the following mantra recited:

11. The mantra: "O lord the creator of all worlds, the ruler of all, the form of all forms, worshipped by Dhruva and the deities guarding the quarters, be pleased to make your presence in this idol . Bow to Ananta."

12. When the night is over and the sun rises and the quarters are clear, it should be taken to the doorway of the sanctum.

13. Then my devotees should perform the bathing ceremony there.

14. He may perform this bath in the prescribed manner uttering *Namo nārāyaṇāya* and reciting the following mantra:

15. "This water I have brought, O lord, from rivers like Gaṅgā and the Oceans and scented with camphor for your bath".

16. The idol should be taken to the interior and installed there with the following mantra:

17. "O lord of the worlds, known through the Vedas, worshipped by those who know the Vedas, having the form of sacrifice, the giver of the fruit of sacrifice, I invoke you here for sacrifice. Be pleased to remain in this idol. Wealth, people, silver, gold, bow to Ananta."

18. After installation in this manner with a pleasant mind, *arcanā* should be done in the manner stated before.

19. Then blue garments may be offered, as they are dear to me.

20. Taking clothes and kneeling down, *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* should be uttered and the following mantra recited.

21. The mantra: "O lord, resplendent like moonbeams, resembling the conch, jasmine and milk, may you be pleased to accept these garments for my sake : Dress, good dress, O lord, endless, imperishable, causing death, Cause, easy to obtain, difficult to attain, the supreme".

22. After giving me clothes with this mantra, food is to be given with all reverence, uttering *Namo nārāyaṇāya* and reciting the following mantra:

23. "O lord Puruṣottama, may you be pleased to receive this food containing cooked rice and *pāyasa* with sugar and ghee".

24. After this *naivedya*, water should be given.

25. For the welfare of the world, *Śāntipāṭha* should be recited.

26. "Om, peace is brought about by Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Rātrī, Sandhyā, Nakṣatras and Diks. Motionless, vibrating, moving, moving in the sky, rapidly moving, having the hue of lotus, Bow to Vāsudeva."

27. After the *Śāntipāṭha* which removes sins, the devotees should be honoured.

28. The Brahmins should then be fed according to capacity and water taken from them should be sprinkled on me.

29. Then Brahmins and relatives should be sent off with folded hands.

30. The preceptor should be worshipped with gifts. When he is worshipped, I am worshipped.

31. He who does this remains in my world for as many thousands of years as there are drops of water falling at the end of the meal.

32. He who worships in this manner liberates his paternal and maternal lines.

33. This is the way to instal silver images. I shall now tell you about the installation of golden images.

34. The golden image may be made in the same manner as the silver image and invocation etc., may be made similarly.

35. The benefit of erecting idols in wood, stone, bronze etc., becomes a crore times more with golden images.

36. Twentyone generations are liberated (by one installing golden idols) and he is finally merged in me without being born again.

37. O Earth, I have thus told you what you desired to know. What else am I to tell you?

Earth said:

38. You have now told me about the idols made of gold and other metals. You remain in all these, no doubt, but you remain in Sālagrāmas too.

39. O Mādhava, be pleased to tell me the number (of these Sālagrāmas) to be worshipped in homes and the general and special benefits arising therefrom, as also the number in worshipping Śiva and other deities.

Varāha said:

40. In the house two (Śiva)liṅgas should not be worshipped, so also three Sālagrāmas.

41. Two Cakras from Dvārakā should not be worshipped, so also two Sūryas. Three Gaṇeśas should not be worshipped, so also three Śaktis (Ambikās)."

42. A Pair of Śālagrāmas should be worshipped, but not two pairs. Odd number should not be worshipped because this amounts to a single one.

43. Burnt or broken (Sālagrāmas) should not be worshipped at home, as this may bring about calamities.

44. But even if broken, if the Cakra is clear, then it is good enough.

45. I shall tell you, O Earth, the merit of worshipping twelve Sālagrāmas.

46. The same result is attained in a single day as of worshipping twelve crores of liṅgas worshipped with golden lotuses for twelve aeons.

47. The merit that accrues to a man worshipping a hundred Sālagrāmas, I am unable to recount even for hundred years.

48. All deities can be worshipped in idols by people of all castes. Crystal liṅgas can also be done similarly.

49. But a Sālagrāma should not be touched by men of inferior caste or by women and Śūdras.

50. If a woman or Śūdra touches it even out of curiosity, the result will be torment in hell till deluge.

51. But if a woman or Śūdra has devotion (for me through the Śālagrāma), then worship may be got performed by others without oneself touching it. The drinking of that water (used for worship) removes all sins.

52. The offerings made to Śiva like leaf, flower, fruit and water, are prohibited from use. But they get purified by association with Śālagrāma.

53. I shall tell you the merit that accrues to a person who makes gift of a Śālagrāma together with some gold to a devotee.

54. It is equivalent to making gift to a worthy person of the whole earth with its gold, mountains, forests and oceans.

55. Sale of a Śālagrāma leads to hell both the seller and the buyer.

56. I will be unable to say in full about the good results o this worship even if I take a hundred years.

57. I have thus told you about the installation of idols and the specialities relating to the Śālagramas and the Liṅgas.

58. I have also told you about the rules in worship. What else do you wish to know ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYSEVEN

The origin of Śrāddha

Sūta said:

1. Hearing all this from Lord Nārāyaṇa, the ascetic Earth asked Him again with folded hands.

Earth said:

2. I have now heard this great narration and the great merit that results from the place. But I wish to know another secret and it behoves you to tell me that.

3. You told me about Pitṛyajña (rites to propitiate the manes) in connection with the hunting adventure of King Somadatta.

4. What is the merit of Pitṛyajña and how is it to be done ? Who conceived of this Śrāddha, for what purpose and of what nature is it ?

5. I wish to know all this. Please tell me in detail.

Varāha said:

It is quite proper that you ask me this.

6. Because of the weight you have to bear, you have become stupefied. But I shall give you divine intelligence to enable you, O fair one, to grasp the significance.

7. I shall tell you about the origin of Śrāddha, but before that I shall tell you about the origin of heaven and Devas.

8. When there was no light and darkness was spreading everywhere, the idea dawned upon me to create the three worlds with all their moving and non-moving beings.

9. I was then all alone, sleeping on the bed formed by the serpent Śeṣa and not inclined to activity.

10. I keep awake and fall asleep due to my power of Māyā, and this Viṣṇumāyā, O Earth, you are unable to know.

11. Thousands of aeons have passed and thousands will be coming. Still māyā is unintelligible to you.

12. I have held you with this boar form of mine for five hundred divine years. Still you have not known this.

13. That is why you ask me this question. (I shall tell you).

My single form became transformed into three, namely Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara.

14. Because of anger I created Īśvara (Hara), the destroyer of Asuras. From my navel appeared a lotus and Brahmā was within it.

15. Thus by Vaiṣṇavī māyā this world came into being and we three gods remain in it in great pleasure.

16. But there was only water everywhere and nothing could be discerned except a banyan tree, the tree of Viṣṇu's fame.

17. In this banyan tree I remained as a little boy with my māyā, seeing in entirety the three worlds that I created. I am holding you, O fair Earth, and you know this.

18. After some time, O goddess, I produced Baḍavāmukha (the marine fire) by my māyā, to dry up the water.

19. When the deluge was thus over, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, was told by me after meditating for a while.

20. "O Brahmā, create quickly the gods, demons and men."

21-22. Thus told, Brahmā took his vessel of water, cleansed himself with the water, and then created Devas—Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Aśvins, and the group of Martus and also, for the liberation of all Brāhmaṇas who are the gods on earth.

23. From the hands arose the Kṣatriyas, from the thighs Vaiśyas, and from the feet Śūdras for the service of all.

24. Devas and Asuras who were thus born of Brahmā had the power of penance, heroism and strength.

25. To Aditi were born Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Aśvins and the groups of Maruts, all together constituting thirtythree divinities.

26. To Diti were born Asuras, the enemies of gods.

27. Brahmā then created Ṛṣis full of penance and resplendent like the sun, and all of them Brahmins well-versed in the

śāstras. The sons of Brahmā then created their sons and grandsons.

28. To Nimi was born Śrīmān renowned as Ātreya, (being a descendant of Atri) who became great and full of penance even at the time of his birth.

29. He performed penance with full concentration of mind and steadiness of body, in the midst of five fires, standing on one foot, with hands thrown upwards,

30. Feeding himself on fallen leaves and water, remaining in the water in winter, and performing Kṛcchra and Cāndrāyaṇa.

31. He performed penance like this for a thousand years O Earth, and then died.

32. Seeing the son dead, Nimi became griefstricken and was brooding over what had happened day and night.

33. Immersed in this sorrow and thinking deeply what he might do, an idea occurred to him at the end of three days.

34. It was the Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha and he had become particularly pure. His mind had given up all worldly objects and his intellect had become expansive.

35. Then with concentration of mind, he began to think of Śrāddhakalpa (the rules relating to the conduct of Śrāddha).

36. What can be the sort of food, roots and fruits, what items will be fresh and tasty, what will be particularly suitable and so on.

37. The sage then made himself pure (by bath etc), and inviting (seven) Brahmins, propitiated them with everything (that occurred to him to be duly done).

38. Each was separately honoured and then all were seated together and fed with meat, vegetables, roots and fruits.

39. With great attention he then placed Kuśa grass with their tips facing south, and gave *piṇḍa* to Śrīmān uttering his name and gotra.

40. Having done this, the sage felt (relieved) that he had discharged the dictates of *dharma* (with regard to his departed son).

41. When the day came to a close and the sun had set, he performed the ritual that is to be done with meditation and which is conducive to the attainment of Brahman (namely, the worship of Sandhyā).

42. He did it alone, in seclusion, with full control of mind, free from desire and declining even what is offered, sitting steadfast in a clean place,

43. In a seat that is neither very high nor very low and arranged with Kuśa grass, (deer)skin and cloth in successive layers, with control of senses, mind drawn inward and fixed on a single object,

44. And practised this Yoga for the purification of self, sitting steady and erect with the chest, neck and head in line,

45. Directing the eyes to the tip of the nose and not looking anywhere else, free from fear and radiant in self. Thus did he do in contemplation of Brahman.

46. My devotees, without anything else in mind, should remain in this manner with full control and direct the mind always towards me.

47. He thus performed the worship of Sandhyā. Then the night set in. He began to think again and his mind became afflicted with sorrow.

48. He began to repent for having done the rite of piṇḍa (for his son), because what he did was never done (or sanctioned) by the sages.

49. "Libation done for a son is improper. Alas, I have foolishly done it out of my love (for him).

50. How will the sages spare me from burning me with their curse? What will Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Piśācas, Uragas and Rākṣasas, as also my own manes, say about this?"

51. He was thinking in this manner, O Earth, till the whole night passed.

52. When the day dawned and the sun rose, he worshipped Sandhyā and performed rites to be done in fire.

53. He then became again immersed in his earlier thought and was extremely sad. With his mind thus full of grief, he said to himself:

54. "Fie upon my age, fie upon my action, fie upon my strength, fie upon my very life. I do not find in my life the son with all pleasures.

55. The wise say that the sorrow in the mind (because of this) leads to hell called Pūtikā. It is the son that saves one from this (sorrow) in this world and (from the hell) in the other world.

56-57. (Even) by worshipping gods, giving munificent gifts and making offerings in fire, scrupulously observing the prescribed rules, a man attains heaven (only) through the son, a grandfather through the grandson and a great-grandfather through the great-grandson. Now that I am without my son Śrīmān, I don't wish to live."

58-59. At that time the great sage Nārada came to that penance-grove, which was full of hermitages of sages, beautiful with plenty of flowers, fruits and water.

60. Seeing him enter his hermitage beaming with effulgence, (Nimi) honoured him with welcome.

61. He gave him *pādya* and *arghya* and seated him properly. Taking the seat, Nārada spoke to him.

Nārada said:

62. "O you highly intelligent Nimi, cast off your sorrow and listen to me.

63. You are now grieving over one who is not really an object for grief, and though you are intelligent, you also not realise this fact. Those of true learning never grieve over the dead or the living.

64. Grieving over one that is dead, lost or gone, simply makes glad those that are not friends; the departed person never returns.

65. I do not find immortality for any moving or non-moving being in any of the three worlds. Gods, demons, Gandharvas, men, beasts and birds, all have death; only they wait for their time.

66. Every being that is born is bound to die at the destined time, and it has to respond to the call of death.

67-68. Your son, the great Śrīmān, the repository of all opulence, performed extremely difficult penance for a full thousand years, and when it was time for him to die, attained supreme divine beatitude. Knowing all this, you should not give yourself up to sorrow."

69-70. Thus told by Nārada, the great Brahmin Nimi, who was perturbed in mind, prostrated at his feet, and spoke to him with fear and shyness, in a pitiable voice, sobbing and heaving frequently.

71. "O great sage, the foremost among those who know *dharma*, I am greatly consoled by your sweet and kind words.

72. Be pleased to listen, whether it be due to affection or friendship, what I say with reverence. What I did out of love for my (departed) son, instils sorrow incessantly in my mind.

73. I propitiated seven Brahmins with food, fruits, and the rest and then released piṇḍa over darbha grass spread on the floor.

74. I performed libation also in *apasavya* (with Yajñopavīta on the left).

75. All this I did because of my sorrow. But it is not something approved by the good, not conducive to the attainment of heaven and not favourable to renown.

76. Being deluded by ignorance, I had lost then my common sense, memory and stamina. I had never heard of it and the gods or sages had never done it.

77. All that I have now is the great fear of the fierce curse that the sages may pronounce on me."

Nārada said:

78. "O great Brahmin, don't be afraid. Go to your father and seek refuge in him. I don't find here anything wrong. What you have done is *dharma*, no doubt."

79. Thus said by Nārada, Nimi entered into meditation and resorted to his father through thought, word and dead. He alone was in his mind who was the originator of his line.

80. When thus meditated upon, the father came to the ascetic son who was tormented by the grief at the loss of his son.

81. He then comforted him in agreeable words "O ascetic Nimi, you performed Pitṛyajña (sacrifice for the manes).

82. The Pitṛyajña (is a ceremony) declared by Brahmā himself as *dharma*.

83. A *dharma* greater than this is Śrāddha, which was first done by Brahmā himself."

84. I shall tell you, O fair one, what he heard from Nārada, the foremost among those who know the rules, about the Śrāddha ceremony and what is to be done to the dead.

85. I give to the person concerned the necessary mental power for this.

86. To every being that is born, the time for death will certainly occur. Everyone will have to leave (this world) by the order of the lord of death. There is no immortality even for small beings like the ant.

87. Liberation is, of course, there, but that is through the (necessary) actions and by the expiations.

88. There are three (qualities) in the body,—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. People become short-lived at the close of the aeon.

89. He in whom Tamas predominates does not understand the Sāttvika because of the defects in his actions. It is hell, animalhood and demoniac nature that pertains to Tamas.

90. Those who know the Veda resort to the Sāttvika to enter the path of liberation. Knowledge of *dharma*, godliness and renunciation from Sāttvika,

91. Cruelty, cowardice, despondency, aggressiveness, shamelessness, ignorance and ghostliness are the Tāmasa qualities.

92. The Tāmasic person never understands what is told to him. He is always haughty and heedless.

93. Strength, good speech, fickleness of mind, perseverance, valour and ego are the qualities of the Rājasa person.

94. Forbearance, composure, purity of mind, undivided attention, penance and study of scripture are the Sāttvika qualities.

95. Considering all this, sorrow should be given up, because it leads to the ruin of everything.

96. Sorrow consumes the body, intelligence is lost through sorrow, so too humility, courage, righteousness, prosperity, fame, memory and tactfulness.

97. All the *dharmas* leave the man who is hit by sorrow. Thus the father asked the son to give up his sorrow.

98. O Earth, he who commits injury or speaks falsehood due to the power of love, is tormented in hell because of his own wrong actions.

99. Controlling affection (and attachment) in everything, one should direct the intellect in matters of *dharma* for the welfare of the world. This is the truth I tell you.

100. I say this for all the four castes, what Svāyambhuva[1] said to Nimi and others with regard to srāddha.

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1. Svāyambhuvamanu of whom Nimi was the descendant.

101. When (to a dying person) the life-breath has reached the throat and he is full of fear and anxiety, he should be quickly taken out of the house.

102. He should be laid over a layer of Kuśa grass. He may not be able to see anything even when he gets momentary consciousness.

103. Then Brahmins should be asked to recite the scriptures and gifts of gold and money should be made.

104. For welfare in the other world, gift of a cow is particularly efficacious.

105. Cows are brought into being by the creator in this world as the embodiment of all gods. They move about yielding nectar (milk). By making gifts of them, all sins are removed.

106. Then should be uttered into the ear, as the life-breath is leaving, the divine scripture.

107. To my devotee who is in this struggling condition, the mantra should be recited in the prescribed manner, and by this means liberation from *saṁsāra* should be procured.

108. Madhuparka should be quickly brought and administered with the following mantra.

109. The mantra: "Receive this pure madhuparka, which is equivalent to ambrosia, which is the foremost among the means for getting rid of *saṁsāra*, which is prescribed by Lord Nārāyaṇa, which is honoured by all the gods and which gives relief to the devotees when their bodies are cremated."

110. With this mantra, madhuparka should be given at the time of death, as it brings about pleasure in the other world. If life departs in this manner, the man does not return to this world.

111-112. When a man is unconscious as he is nearing death, he should be taken to the foot of a big tree and his body should be smeared with ghee, oil and sandalpaste, considering them all as giving him effulgence and eternality.

113. He should then be placed in water, with the head on the southern side and bathed invoking all the tīrthas in the water.

114-115. Tīrthas like Gayā, the holy rocks, Kurukṣetra, the holy rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā, Kauśikī, the purifying Payoṣṇī,

116. The auspicious Gaṇḍakī, the strength-giving Sarayū, the nine gardens in the Varāha tīrtha in Piṇḍāraka,

117. All other tīrthas on earth, the four oceans, all these should be mentally invoked in the water before he is bathed in it.

118. When he is actually dead, the pyre should be duly arranged and the body should be placed on it with the head on the southern side.

119. Meditating on gods like Agni and taking the fire (pot) in the hand, fire should be blazed up and the following mantra uttered:

120. "After doing all difficult actions, knowingly or unknowingly, the man died (*lit.* reduced to the five elements) when the time for death came.

121. (O fire), consume this body of his which was the seat for all that was righteous and otherwise, and for all desire and stupefaction, so that he may go to the celestial world."

122. Then a circumambulation should be quickly done and the fire placed on the head.

123. This is the sort of cremation for all the four castes.

124. Bath should then be taken and the clothes well washed, and returning, piṇḍa should be offered on the ground for the departed. There is *Śauca* (pollution) from that time onwards and so one should (during that period) keep aloof from service to god (like worship, etc).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYEIGHT

The rituals of Śrāddha[1]

Earth said:

1. O Mādhava, lord of the gods, lord of the worlds, I wish to know from you the rites to be done during the period of āśauca.

Varāha said:

2. Listen, O auspicious one. I shall tell you about āśauca and how people are purified after it.

3. On the third day after the death (of the relative), bath should be taken in the river and piṇḍa should be given together with three handfuls of water.

1. This is on the basis of contents. The title actually given is *Piṇḍakalpaśrāddhotpattiprakaraṇam* based on the statement at the close of the chapter.

4. On the fourth, fifth and sixth days, there should be piṇḍa and one handful of water. On the seventh day this should be in a different place. This should be continued upto the tenth day.

5. On the tenth day, all those belonging to the gotra of the departed should bathe taking oil of sesamum and myrobalan and wash the clothes with cleaning materials.

6. After giving piṇḍa, they should get themselves shaven, bathe again according to rites, and return home along with the relatives.

7. On the eleventh day, the Ekoddiṣṭa ceremony should be done and after bath the (soul of) the dead person should be united in Brahmins.

8. This Ekoddiṣṭa is to be done by all the four castes and Brahmin should be fed with all the materials prescribed.

9. After bath, the departed soul should be united with the departed.[1]

10. Brahmā has laid down that for the first three castes and also for Śūdras who were really doing service, cooked food should be used and for others uncooked food.

11. On the thirteenth day Brahmins should be fed with well-cooked food.

12-13. Having in mind the name of the dead and with conviction that its aim is to make him go to heaven, the Brahmin should be sought in his house, and invited in all humility, uttering mentally the following mantra:

14. "You have gone to the celestial world and ordained by the god of death. Your mind has become the wind. So enter this Brahmin."

15. The Brahmin should be approached soon after sunset, and after giving *pādya*, should be prostrated before and his feet caressed, all for the sake of the departed.

16-17. So long as the Brahmin is having in his body the soul of the departed thus invoked, he shall not, O Earth, touch my images.

18. In the morning, soon after sunrise, proper shaving should be got done for the invited Brahmin.

19. An oil bath should then be given for him which gives pleasure to the departed.

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2. Perhaps there is some confusion here. In verse 7 we get *pretaṁ vipreṣu yojayet* and here *pretam preteṣu yojayet.*

20. A small earthen pedestal by a heap of clods on a low clean place near a river or a pond, should be made as the place for the departed.

21-22. This may be marked into sixtyfour parts. Then on the south-east in the shade or under a tree on the river bank, the rites for the departed are to be done in a place free from Caṇḍālas and other outcastes and creatures like the fowl, dogs and pigs.

23-24. If Śrāddha is done in a place, where the dog blocks (the people) by its moan, the pig by its grunt, the fowl by the wind wafted by its wings and the Caṇḍāla (by his very presence), it brings about bondage to the departed (and not release). The wise should avoid such places for these rites.

25-26. O goddess, Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Piśācas, Uragas, Rākṣasas, Sacrifices and all beings moving and non-moving are set on your surface.

27. And I hold this universe full of Viṣṇu-māyā and with the Caṇḍāla upwards and all the good and evil of the people.

28. Therefore, let the libation be made in the clods on the pedestal.

29. Those who do libation without these earthen clods, make what remains impure.

30. Neither gods nor manes accept such offerings and that leads only to the ghastly hell.

31. The offering for the departed should be made in the earthen pedestal in the forenoon uttering the name and gotra and saying that the piṇḍa is offered.

32. After this, all in the family and those in the same gotra are to partake of the remains (after the offering). This food should not be given to those belonging to other gotras for whom it is not permissible to take it.

33. This is what is ordained for all the four castes and those that are departed get propitiated by this.

34. He who eats it before offering to the departed, shall go to a great river and bathe there along with the clothes he wears (as expiation).

35. (Then for feeding the Brahmins), first calling to mind all the tīrthas, water should be thrice sprinkled on the floor, and thus getting the place purified, the Brahmins should be quickly brought there and, when they have come, the ritual of welcome should be made for them.

36. *Arghya and pādya* should then be given and then *Āsana* (seat) with the following mantra:

37. The mantra: "O great Brahmin, please take this seat offered and rest in it; also be pleased to favour me."

38. After seating the Brahmin thus in the seat, umbrella should be given for keeping out beings moving in the sky like Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Asuras.

39. The umbrella is meant for the effulgent to hold in the sky.

40. For the sake of the departed, the umbrella may be given when the Brahmin is pleased with earlier offerings.

41. The Brahmin may be made to hold it over his head.

42. In the sky, Devas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Asuras and Rākṣasas will see the departed, and this will produce shyness in him.

43. When he (the departed) is thus shy, the Asuras and Rākṣasas may laugh at him. To avoid this, the umbrella was devised by Āditya long ago for all those who go to such regions and for the sages.

44. There may be shower of fire, shower of stones, shower of hot water and shower of ashes day and night.

45. The umbrella is to be given to the Brahmin for warding off all this.

46. Then foot-wear should be given to enable comfortable walking. I shall tell you the purpose of this.

47. The feet should not be injured in the region of Yama which is dark and difficult to traverse.

48. The departed is led alone through that difficult part day and night by the god of death and his associates.

49. Therefore the Brahmin should be given footwear for the protection of the feet.

50. (The departed has to move along) places of hot sand and those full of thorns. The foot-wear helps to cross them (unhurt).

51. Then *Dhūpa* (incense) and *Dīpa* (lamp) should be given with mantra in order that they may go to the departed.

52. The departed should then be invoked in a stretch of darbha on the ground uttering the name and gotra.

53. (Sandal paste should be offered saying:)

"You have left this world and got liberated. Receive this sandal paste given with reverence, O you departed".

54. "O Brahmin, accept this sandal paste, flowers, incense and lamp and give liberation to the departed".

55. Similarly, clothes and ornaments should be given to the Brahmin and then cooked food again and again.

56. Such materials as can be used by the departed should be given. Then (the performer of these rites) should wash his feet thrice. This is common for all castes.

57. *But in the case of Śūdras all this should be without* mantra. What the Śūdra gives without mantra, the Brahmin receives with mantra.

58. After doing all this, the Brahmin should be fed with cooked food.

59. When the Brahmin, purified by knowledge, is eating, the offering with all its accessories to the departed should be given.

60. It may be known by the wise that godhood and Brahmin-hood are given through the piṇḍa for the departed and manhood through libation.

61. For the manes the offering should be accompanied by mantra:

62. After washing hands, the cooked food along with its accessories is accepted by the Brahmin with mantra.

63. After the Brahmin eats for the departed, (what is left) should be shared by all the relatives of him for whom it is done.

64. None should prevent anything being given to the Brahmin. He who prevents, incurs the sin of killing the preceptor.

65. In such a case what is offered is not accepted by gods, fires or manes, thus resulting in the loss of *dharma*. Then the departed does not get propitiation.

66. With all this consideration in mind for guarding dharma, should the food for the departed be given in the midst of relations.

67-68. When the Brahmin is pleased, particularly with the offering for the departed, the departed soul gets free from sins.

69. When he is fully satisfied with the cooked food, water should be poured into his palm.

70. The remnants of the food (left by the Brahmin in the

eating vessel) should not be thrown away. With his permission it should be disposed of in a blemishless manner.

71. After purification with sacred waters sanctified by śāntimantras, the performer should go to the place of libation and bow to the earth.

72. He should utter mantras and praises full of devotion for the earth.

73. "I bow to you again and again, O Earth, mother of the world, holding big mountains. I bow again and again to you in whom the whole universe rests."

74. Then uttering the name and gotra of the departed, water with sesamum should be poured.

75. Kneeling down and prostrating before the Brahmins, they should be raised up holding their hands with mantra.

76. A bed should then be given and also ornaments and collyrium. The Brahmin should receive them and occupy the bed.

77. After a while, going to the place of libation, a cow should be given to the Brahmin by holding its tail.

78. The vessel made of Udumbara wood containing water and black sesamum should be taken and mantras relating to the cow should be recited.

79. The cow should be gifted holding its tail and sprinkling it with this water sanctified by the mantras and capable of removing sins.

80. Then the departed (who was invoked earlier) should be released and gifts given to Brahmins. The balls of rice offered to the manes should be given to the crows, because of their impurity after the offering.

81. Then the performer should go to his house with other Brahmins and feed them all with cooked food.

82. Food should be scattered also for tiny beings like the ants for propitiating the departed.

83. When all these are thus made happy, happiness accrues to him who has departed to the world of the dead.

84. All the food thus distributed becomes an inexhaustible store for him. These are the rites to be done for the departed to enable change from that state (to become manes).

85. This will be adopted by all the four castes since it is something revealed to Svayambhū.

86. Now you need not have any fear, O son, for having done the obsequial rites to your son.

87. I have now told you everything in detail and in the presence of Nārada.

88. You have now set the precedent for the sacrifice for the departed son. Hereafter, this Pitṛyajña will be established in the world.

89. The rules of the rites for the manes were thus told by Ātreya (the father)[1].

90. The oblations should be done in the third, seventh, ninth and eleventh months after death, and at the end of one full year the annual rites should be performed.

91. Getting pure in body and mind and with concentration of mind, the departed should be invoked and cooked food offered according to the rules.

92. This should be done with mantra for all the castes, except the Śūdras for whom it should be without mantra.

93. When the rites for the departed are over at the end of the year, some get full release and some return (to be re-born in the world).

94. Although there may be the grandfather, daughter-in-law, wife, and relatives close and distant, we should realise that this world is like a dream.

95. All of them mourn for a while, but soon turn themselves away. The bond of affection and attachment is there for a moment, but that is broken soon.

96. Whose is the mother, whose is the father, whose the wife and whose the sons? In life after life they are there and have attachment by bond of delusion.

97. But the rites for the dead should be done with a feeling of attachment, though it is true that we are having thousands of parents and hundreds of wives and sons in the numerous cycles of birth and death.

98. (What I told you) is the rules of obsequies laid down by Svayambhū.

99. When the rites relating to the departed (*pretakārya*) are over, the status of manes (*pitṛtva*) is attained, and so libation for manes (*pitṛtarpaṇa*) should be performed on the new moon day every month.

1. This is possibly an interpolated passage.

100. The father, grand-father and great-grand-father (should be given libation), and if the Brahmin is fed on that day, they get permanently propitiated.

101. After describing the rites of Pitṛyajña in this manner, Ātreya (the father) meditated for a while and soon disappeared.

Nārada said:

102. "Having heard about the obsequies narrated by Ātreya for all the four castes, (you should now be convinced that) you have (really) established *dharma*.

103. The sages also perform Pitṛyajña as part of *śrāddha* on a particular day every month. The Brahmins do it in this way and the Śūdras without mantra.

104. The Śrāddha performed by Nimi is followed by the twiceborn and it has come to be known as 'Nimiśrāddha'.

105. O great sage, let good befall you. I take leave of You."

106. So saying, the great sage Nārada returned to heaven spreading his lustre everywhere.

107. O Earth, this is the conception of piṇḍa and the origin of Śrāddha and they are established among the Brāhmaṇas by the sage Ātreya himself.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTYNINE

The qualities of the Brahmin to be fed in Śrāddha[1]

Earth said:

1. "I have now heard in full about the Śrāddha, the purities and impurities connected with it and also about the feeding for the departed relating to the four castes.

2. I have a doubt and it behoves you to clear it. (You said that) for all the four castes, the gifts should be given to the Brahmins.

1. The title actually given is *Piṇḍakalpotpatti* (origin of the instructions for piṇḍa).

3. Those who receive them, particularly the food for the departed, really do a contemptible thing namely eating with the departed (ghost).

4. By what means does such a Brahmin free himself from such a position and how does he help the donor? I ask this, O Janārdana, because of your affection for me and my nature as a woman (who always has doubts)."

5. Asked thus by Earth, the Lord in the form of the boar replied to her in a tone resembling the sound of the conch and Dundubhi.

Varāha said:

6. It is quite proper that you ask me this. I shall tell you how the Brahmin helps himself and the donor.

7. After eating what is offered through him to the departed (*pretabhojya*), the Brahmin wanes in his knowledge.

8. To purify his body, he should undertake fasting. By fasting for one full day and night, he regains his power of knowledge.

9. Then after performing the worship of the morning Sandhyā and making the routine offerings in the fire, he shall perform Homa with sesamum reciting the Śāntimantras.

10. Then he shall go to a river flowing in the eastern direction and bathe there with due rites and drink *pañcagavya* together with *madhuparka*.

11. Taking water sanctified with Śāntimantras in a vessel made of the wood of Udumbara, he shall sprinkle it all over in his residence.

12. After performing propitiatory rites for gods like Agni, he shall perform Bhūtabali and feed Brahmins.

13. The gift of a cow also should be made for the removal of sins. If all this is done, he enters the supreme path (of liberation).

14. If one dies with the food offered through him to the departed in his stomach, he has to remain in the fierce hell till the end of the aeon.

15. Then he becomes a Rākṣasa before he is freed of the sin. So the proper expiation should be done for the welfare of the donor and the recipient.

16. The Brahmin who, after receiving gifts of cow, elephant,

horse, money and the like with mantra and in the prescribed manner, performs the prescribed expiations, surely enables the donor to cross (saṁsāra).

17. The Brahmin who is rich in knowledge and is ever devoted to learning the Vedas, surely enables himself as well as the donor to cross (saṁsāra).

18. O Earth, the Brahmin should not be offended by any person belonging to the three castes.

19. The Brahmin invited for food during a ceremony for gods, birthday, Śrāddha, new moon day or rites connected with the departed, should be carefully chosen.

20. The Brahmin who has mastered the Vedas, who is highly righteous, goodnatured, contented, virtuous, truthful,

21. Forbearing, learned in Śāstras, and wedded to non-violence—should be called.

22. And the gifts should be given to him, because such a person alone is capable of enabling the donor to gain his aim (of crossing *saṁsāra*).

23. But a gift of this sort should never be given to a Kuṇḍa or Gola[1], for then it will be in vain. They pull the donor down.

24. Seeing a Kuṇḍa or Gola in a ceremony for them, the manes get disappointed and fall into hell. In the ceremony for gods also what is given to them goes in vain.

25. Therefore, a gift should never be given to any one not eligible to receive it. In this connection, I shall tell you what once happened in yore. Please listen.

26. In the Avanti country there was a highly righteous king named Medhātithi, a descendant of Manu.

27. He had as his priest one Candraśarmā, a virtuous Brahmin belonging to the Ātreya gotra and very much devoted to the Vedas.

28. The king used to give hundred cows to the Brahmins every day before taking food.

29. Once on the anniversary day of his father in the month of Vaiśākha, Medhātithi invited many Brahmins for Śrāddha.

30. When all of them had come, Medhātithi with pure mind bowed to them all and also to his preceptor and started performing the Śrāddha.

1. Kuṇḍa and Gola are both bastards, the one born to woman by her paramour when her husband is alive, and the other after he is dead.

31. Doing the rites of Śrāddha in the prescribed manner, offering piṇḍa and libation, he gave food to Brahmins sumptuously.

32. Among them was a Gola and to him too the food was given with due rites.

33. Because of this sin, the manes of the king fell from heaven into a forest full of thorns, and they repeatedly began to cry being oppressed by hunger and thirst.

34. Medhātithi chanced to go there for hunting with two or three attendants.

35-36. Seeing them wandering there, he asked them who they were and due to what wrong action they were in that sorrowful state.

The Pitṛs said:

37. "We are the ancestors of king Medhātithi and we are on our way to hell."

38. Hearing these words of theirs, the king felt very sorry and told them in a consoling voice.

Medhātithi said:

39. I am Medhātithi and you are my ancestors. What is the sin committed, as a result of which you are now forced to hell?

The Pitṛs said:

40. "The food in the Śrāddha for us was given to a Gola and, as a result of that misdeed, we got to hell.

41. After suffering there much, we will return to heaven. O son, you are a liberal giver and see to the welfare of the world.

42. You have gifted numerous cows with munificent dakṣiṇā. By the merit of that we will return to the pleasant heaven.

43. But there will not be food there to satisfy us. So you have to perform the Śrāddha again for our satisfaction."

44. Hearing these words, Medhātithi returned home and, calling his preceptor Candraśarmā, told him.

Medhātithi said:

45. "O Candraśarmā, I am going to perform the Śrāddha again. Call the Brahmins but see that there is no Kuṇḍa or Gola among them."

46-47. Immediately, the priest Candraśarmā called Brahmins who were always learning the Vedas, who were good-natured, forbearing, of good family, free from anger and of fine conduct, and the king conducted Śrāddha.

48. After Śrāddha, piṇḍas were offered and libation given and the Brahmins were fed and honoured with dakṣiṇā.

49. They were then released and the king took his food. Soon he went to the forest and saw the manes.

50. Seeing them now well-nourished, strong and happy, he was very much delighted.

51. The manes spoke to him with modesty and pleasure: "May good befall you. We are now proceeding to heaven.

52. For our sake you should be careful about one thing that anything meant for the gods or manes should never be given to a Gola (or Kuṇḍa). The wise declare it to be in vain what is offered through them.

53. If in a ceremony meant for the propitiation of gods or manes, a suitable Brahmin is not found available, the offering may be given to a cow, keeping in mind the aim always.

54. If even a cow is not available, it may be thrown in a river.

55. But it should never be given to an ineligible person, an unbeliever or one who is against his own teacher, and surely not to a Gola and never to a Kuṇḍa."

56. So saying the manes went to heaven and Medhātithi returned to his city together with the Brahmins. Thereafter, he carefully observed what the manes had said.

57. Therefore it is said, O goddess, that a single virtuous Brahmin enables us to tide over even the worst difficulties.

58. A single one is capable of taking us across. Therefore, O Earth, gifts should be given to the true Brahmin.

59. Śrāddha is approved by all gods, demons, men, Gandharvas and others.

60. Sages like Nimi began to do it every month in the fortnight of the manes.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY

Other details about Śrāddha[1]

Earth said:

1. "O Lord, when men or animals die, some go to hell while others go to heaven.

2. This world is like a dream. Here the good and bad are the result of one's own actions. It is sustained by the power of your māyā.

3. O Lord, who are the manes that eat the essence of Śrāddha? They have existence in the fire according to the actions done.

4. How are the rules of piṇḍa to be observed month after month? Who are those that eat in Śrāddha and what are the rituals for the manes? I very much desire to know this for certain."

5. Asked thus by Earth, Lord Nārāyaṇa in the form of the boar replied.

Varāha said:

6. Well have you asked, O Earth, in your eagerness to see the establishment of *dharma*. I shall tell you what you seek to know.

7. The enjoyers in Pitṛyajña are the father, grand-father and great-grand-father.

8-9. The saṅkalpa for the Piṇḍa should be made on the particular day in the month in the particular fortnight and on the day in which the nakṣatra is in combination with the particular tithi. The Śrāddha done then yields great result.

10. O fair one, listen. I shall tell you all about Śrāddha which the learned do with great attention.

11. Some of the twice-born perform the rite called Brahmayajña, some perform Devayajña in fire.

12. Others perform Bhūtayajña and yet others Manuṣyayajña when they live the life of a householder.

13. I shall tell you about the Pitṛyajña. Those who perform

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[1]. The title given is *Śrāddhapitṛyajñaniścayaprakaraṇam* (determination of *śrāddha* and *pitṛyajña*).

a single one or a hundred of this, remain in me. This, I tell you, is the truth.

14. O Mādhavi, in *havya* as well as *kavya*[1], Agni (fire) is the mouth of Devas,

15. In all sacrifices I am the Uttarāgni, I am the Dakṣiṇāgni and I am the Āhavanīyāgni.[2]

16. I am the fire and the purifier in all matters relating to sacrifices for gods.

17. For Vaiśvadeva may be engaged a pure Brahmacārin, a mendicant in holy tīrthas and an anchorite in the Vānaprastha stage.

18. These are to be worshipped for the sake of gods, but should not be chosen for ritualistic feeding in Śrāddha. I shall tell you who are the twice-born that are to be engaged in Śrāddha.

19-20. O Mādhavi, the sort of people that are to be fed in Pitṛyajñas are those that are superior, contented, forbearing, calm, having full control of the senses, taking pleasure and sorrow alike, truthful, propounding dharma, well versed in Vedic knowledge and eating well.

21. The offering should first be made in fire in tīrthas sacred for Devas and then to the Brahmin.

22. In the Pitṛyajñas the rules for different castes relating to Śrāddha should be observed.

23-24. During Śrāddha in Pitṛyajña, the food should not be seen by dogs, fowls or pigs. The performer should not see those Brahmins who are forbidden eating in his company, who have not undergone sacred rituals, who apply themselves to all kinds of work and who eat anything without discrimination.

25. The Śrāddha that is seen by the prohibited persons is considered 'Rākṣasa'. I have ordained already the offering in such śrāddha to Bali when he overpowered the three worlds.

26. Such a Śrāddha is taken to be one without mantras and rituals. Therefore, the wise should avoid such people in Śrāddha.

27. One should keep oneself pure during Śrāddha and, making the Brahmin pleased, he should be fed free from the sight of others.

1. *Havya* is the offering for gods and *Kavya* the offering for manes.
2. These are the three forms of fire laid down for various ceremonies.

28. The manes should then be invoked with mantra according to the prescribed rules. Three piṇḍas should then be offered, together with condiments, for the father, grand-father and great-grand-father.

29-30. Water with sesamum should be given every month after bowing to the goddesses who are the carriers of such water, namely Vaiṣṇavī, Kāśyapī and Ajayā. When done in this way, the manes doubtless become propitiated.

31-32. I have made the supreme soul reside in the bodies of gods. From the body of gods, O beautiful goddess, three beings came out. They are the Pitṛdevas (manes-gods) who enjoy piṇḍas given for the manes.

33. The Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Pannagas, all in airy form, watch the pitfalls during performance of Śrāddha.

34. Upon those who perform Pitṛyajña with due attention, the manes bestow long life, fame, strength, effulgence, wealth, sons, kine, women and health.

35. Such men, by their actions, go to the auspicious world beyond. After death, they will never have to be born as animals.

36. The householder who worships the manes, gods becomes the saviour of those (of his ancestors) who are tormented in hell.

37. He who fully propitiates the Brahmin according to rules in Śrāddha makes the manes propitiated and enables them to go to the world of eternity.

38. Those who worship the manes attain supreme beatitude and, being thus blessed, reach the Sāttvic white path.

39. I shall tell you another thing in brief, O fair one, please listen.

40. Those who are engulfed in the darkness of ignorance and are obstinate, are tormented in hell, bound by their own hundreds of strings of attachment.

41-42. For such people who thus suffer endless torment, if their sons or grandsons offer libation in any pool of water on new-moon day, propitiation is obtained (and they are able to leave the hell).

43-44. Those who perform Śrāddha duly propitiating the Brahmins and offer in solemnity to the manes piṇḍas and water with sesamum, also are freed (from the fear) of hell and get permanent satisfaction.

45. Water with sesamum should be in a vessel of Udumbara wood. Calling the Brahmins in reverence, dakṣiṇā should be given to them according to the means for the salvation of manes.

46. The gift of a blue bull avoids the torments of hell. When water is poured on the tail of such a bull (while making the gift), the manes become propitiated for sixty thousand years.

47-48. If the blue bull, when released by its horn, digs up a clod of mud by the horn, then the manes of the donor that have fallen in hell, get released, and together with them, the donor goes to the world of Soma.

49-50. By the merit of releasing a blue bull in this manner, they delight themselves in the Somaloka for sixty thousand and sixty hundred years free from hunger and thirst.

51. This is the duty of the householder with his sons and grandsons. They, thus, save their fallen manes and themselves remain in happiness.

52. O fair one, the householder is the source moving animals and flying birds.

53. Thus the state of being the householder is the base wherein *dharma* gets firmly established.

54. The householder who performs Śrāddha every month in the proper tithi in the particular fortnight, liberates all his ancestors.

55. The sacrifices, gifts, learning of scripture, fasts, baths in holy waters, agnihotra, however carefully done following the rules, do not generate the merit in magnitude that the performance of Śrāddha generates for a householder.

56. The manes emanated from the bodies of Brahmā and Viṣṇu[1]. They are the father, grand-father and great-grandfather. These are, O Earth, the manes-gods.

57. Since these devatās invoked in Śrāddhas are the creations of Kaśyapa, gods like Indra and others do not know them.

58. Īśvara (Rudra) does not know this although they came out of his body. Similarly, Brahmā too does not know. This is because of my māyā.

59. Thus are Brahmā and Rudra kept out by my māyā.

60. I shall now tell you another thing relating to Pitṛyajña. Do not give food in Śrāddha to the Brahmin before offering it to Fire.

1. From later stanzas, it appears that Rudra also should be added here.

61. (I shall narrate to you a story). O Earth, after taking *saṅkalpa,* darbha grass was strewn on the floor and piṇḍa was placed on it.

62. But the manes-gods became afflicted by indigestion and could not eat any more. They went to Soma to report their sorrow.

63. Soma saw them suffering from indigestion. Still he extended to them welcome.

Soma said:

64. "Who are you, O gods ? Wherefrom did you arise ? Why are you in grief now ?"

They replied to Soma:

65. "O Soma, please listen to us. The three of us are manes-gods. We arose from Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara respectively.

66. We are the gods for Śrāddha. The piṇḍas for the manes were offered to us. But we developed indigestion and hence our sorrow."

Soma said:

67. "I shall be your friend and be the fourth with you three. We shall seek the means for our well being."

68. So said by Soma, they went with him in pursuit of the means for their relief.

69. They went to Brahmā who was resting in the peak of Meru surrounded by great sages.

70. Soma, the son of Atri, prostrated before Brahmā and told him.

71. "These manes-gods are afflicted by indigestion. They have come here with me seeking your favour. Be pleased to rid them of their ailment."

72. Brahmā meditated for a while and soon saw before him Īśvara.

73. Brahmā then spoke to the great lord of Yoga.

74. "O lord, these manes who are suffering from indigestion, have come to me with Soma seeking my help. It will be good of you to tell me how these have come into being."

75. Thus asked by Brahmā, Īśvara meditated for a while entering into his divine Yoga, and saw there Lord (Viṣṇu) in his Yogic form.

76. He was wonder-struck at this and then spoke to Brahmā.

77. "These are the creations of Viṣṇu by his māyā. They are the exalted manes-gods.

78. The father is the god from Brahmā as he arose out of you. The grandfather is the god from Viṣṇu as he arose out of Viṣṇu. The great-grand-father is the god from Rudra as he arose out of myself.

79. They are assigned as manes-gods in Śrāddha performed by men. They are created by the māyā of Viṣṇu for the sake of Brahmins.

80-81. If it is that they have come to you with Soma, having developed indigestion when they were propitiated in Pitṛyajña, I shall tell you how their indigestion can be cured and they can be made happy. Please listen, O Brahmā, grandfather of the whole world.

82-83. There is the resplendent Fire with his tawny banner, the son of Śāṇḍilya. When men perform Śrāddha, they should first make offering to him. The piṇḍa should be eaten along with him."

84. When Īśvara said like this, Brahmā called in his mind Fire, and he immediately appeared before him.

85. The all-consuming Fire with all his effulgence was associated with the five Yajñas by Brahmā by the power of my māyā.

86. Brahmā then spoke to Fire. "O you consumer of all offerings, the first piṇḍa offered should be eaten by you.

87. What is left after that will be partaken by the gods and the Maruts. Then should be eaten the wholesome food of the Śrāddha (by the Brahmins).

88. The piṇḍa after that is eaten along with Soma."

89. Thus told by Brahmā, O Earth the manes-gods departed with Soma. In the Pitṛyajña (therefore), food is eaten together.

90. So, O Earth, in Śrāddha the first offering is for Agni, after honouring Brahmins for the sake of manes.

91. Then is the piṇḍa on the floor overstrewn darbha grass. There, the first piṇḍa is for father who arose from Brahmā.

92. The middle one is for grand-father who arose from Rudra and the third is for great-grand-father who arose from Viṣṇu.[1]

93. Those who perform Śrāddha with mantras according to the rules laid down, get blessings of the manes. The twice-born perform Śrāddha by the strength of my māyā.

94. I shall now tell you who are the Brahmins that are ineligible to be fed in Śrāddha.

95. Eunuchs, artists, those who condemn the king, those with bad nails or irregular teeth, or are blind or pot-bellied,

96. Dancers, singers, those dependent on the dramatic stage, those who teach Veda for money, those who perform sacrifice for anybody,

97. Those in the service of the king, traders, those of a mixed origin though born to a Brahmin woman, those who have fallen into depravity,

98. Those who have not undergone the saṁskāras, those who do the deeds of Śūdras for their living, those who serve Śūdras, astrologers, those who perform sacrifice for the public,

99. Those under initiation (for some ceremony), usurers, those who sell mercury, those living upon Vaiśyas,

100. Thieves, inscribers, beggars, platform-builders, those that live in hills and mountains, dissemblers,

101. Those that do any kind of action, those that offer for sale everything—these should not be called for eating in Śrāddha.

102. Those who have gone far away and earn their living there, those engaged in the sale of mercury or of sesamum, and actors are considered *Rājasa* in Śrāddha by the wise (and may be called in the absence of others).

103. But the rest in the list should be considered *Rākṣasa* in the form of the Brahmin. They should not be seen in Śrāddha.

104. If such prohibited persons are found eating in Śrāddha, the manes become subjected to serious sorrow for a period of six months.

105. For this expiation should be done quickly.

106. Clarified butter should be poured in fire and the sun should be looked at.

107. The grand-father, father and great-grand-father should be invoked again and sandal paste, flowers, incense and water

1. This is at variance with the earlier statement that the grand-father arose from Viṣṇu and the great-grand-father from Rudra.

with sesamum should be offered and then the Brahmin fed according to rules.

108. I shall tell you another thing briefly, please listen. The Brahmin who is purified by knowledge is purified by mantra.

109. One who never partakes of the food for the dead, should not be insisted upon taking food in Śrāddha but may be given food in Vaiśvadeva.

110. If such persons are given the food for the dead, then one has to do expiation.

111. He goes to hell, but I shall tell you what expiation he has to do.

112. On Dvādaśī day in the month of Māgha he should take rice cooked in milk together with ghee, after propitiating Brahmins with meat and honey.

113. In order to make himself pure, he should make the gift of a cow with calf and then perform Śrāddha again calling Brahmins and giving them unguents.

114. The Brahmacārin should purify himself by giving up the twig for cleaning teeth.

115. It should not be used at all on newmoon days.

116. If one uses the twig for cleaning teeth on newmoon day, he causes torment for Soma and the manes.

117-118. When the day dawns and the sun is rising, one should perform morning duties and invite Brahmin and see to his shaving and pairing of nails. He should then be given oil for bathing and unguents.

119. Rice should then be cooked well with all purity and the Śrāddha should be commenced at noon.

120. The Brahmin should be welcomed and water given for *pādya*. He should be led into the house.

121. Seat should then be given and the manes should be invoked in him. *Arghya* should be given then and the sandalpaste and the garland.

122. Incense and lamp should follow, as also cloth and water with sesamum. The plate for eating should be placed before him.

123. The place should then be marked off by a streak of ashes. The rites in fire should then be done and a circle of water made round the rice.

124. No separate saṅkalpa need be made then regarding the manes. The Brahmin should be requested to eat at ease.

125. The Rakṣoghna mantra should be recited. When the Brahmin is fully satisfied with the food served, *Vikira*[1] should be done.

126. The ritual of offering piṇḍa should then be done laying darbha grass on the floor and facing south.

127. Piṇḍa should be offered for the three manes, father and others. The piṇḍas should be worshipped for the sake of progeny.

128. The Brahmin should be given akṣata in the hand, and after making him pleased with dakṣiṇā, his words of blessing should be obtained, and then released.

129. As long as the piṇḍas remain on the floor, so long do the manes remain in the house.

130. Becoming clean after washing hands, *śāntyudaka* (water for peace) should be offered to the three deities that carry the libation to the manes, namely Vaiṣṇavī, Kāśyapī and Akṣayā,[2] after prostrating in the floor.

131. One should eat the first piṇḍa oneself, the second should be given to the wife and the third thrown into water. This is the rule in Śrāddha.

132. The manes-gods should then be released and obeisance made to them.

133. Done in this way, the manes-gods become pleased and they bless with long life, wealth and progeny.

134. The Śrāddha should be performed with Brahmins of high knowledge; otherwise it will be in vain.

135. He who performs Śrāddha without mantra or ritual, gives part of the merit to my Asura devotee.

136. The moment the Brahmin without knowledge takes the plate for eating in Śrāddha, it is snatched away by the Rākṣasas.

137. O fair one, I have now told you about the rites relating to the manes, its origin, the gifts to be made and merit that accrues from it.

138. O Earth, what else do you now wish to know ?

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1. *Vikira* is scattering of cooked rice in a streak outside the plate in which the Brahmin invoked as manes eats.

2. The name given earlier is Ajayā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYONE

Madhuparka

Sūta said:

1. After knowing so much about dharma, Earth asked again the Lord in the form of the boar.

Earth said:

2. I have now known so much Śāstra from your own mouth. Still I don't feel that I have known all that I should know.

3. It, therefore, behoves you to tell me as to what is the nature of *madhuparka*, who is its devatā and what merit arises from it.

4. And also what are its ingredients and to whom it should be given.

5. Hearing these words of Earth, the great Lord in the form of the boar replied.

Varāha said:

6. Listen, O Earth, I shall tell you how *madhuparka* is made, what is its origin and how it should be gifted.

7. When I, Brahmā and Rudra caused dissolution of the world, all beings remained in an indistinct form.

8. Then from my right side came out Man, beautiful, lustrous, auspicious, humble and famous.

9. Then Brahmā asked me: "O Viṣṇu, who is this person that has came out of your body to be a fourth among us three. He is small and has come out in secret. This is not proper on your part."

10. Hearing these words of Brahmā, I said:

11. "The being that has come out of me is known as Madhuparka, necessary in all ceremonies and capable of bringing about the release of devotees from *saṁsāra*. This, in brief, is what I have to tell you and Rudra."

12. (Brahmā said:) "Good it is that he has come out as your part." The origin of Madhuparka is thus decided.

13. Then Brahmā asked me as to what should be done with madhuparka.

14. "Please tell me what is the way to utilise madhuparka so that it may not go in vain."

15. Hearing the words of Brahmā, I said: Madhuparka is to be made and gifted. If madhuparka is given after performing my worship one goes to the exalted place where there will be no sorrow.

16. I shall now say how its gift should be made by which one attains divine path.

17-18. When in my worship, the upacāras are over, madhuparka should be taken and this mantra uttered:

19. "This, O Lord, is what arose from your body. It is by name madhuparka and it is capable of granting release from saṁsāra, I offer it to you with great devotion. Be pleased to receive it. I bow to you."

20. O Earth, now listen to what I say about the nature of madhuparka and how it is to be offered.

21. It should be made with equal parts of honey, curds and ghee reciting the prescribed mantras if the full benefit should be attained.

22. It may then be offered to me in the proper manner. I have thus told you what you wanted to know.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYTWO

Peace for all

Sūta said:

1-2. Having heard about the origin, gift, merit, result, making and holding of madhuparka, the saintly Earth was wonderstruck, and holding the feet of Lord Janārdana, said:

3. "O Lord, it is dear to you to offer madhuparka after the upacāras in your worship and it should be done then. But tell me how to do it in the best form."

Varāha said:

4. You have asked me well. I shall tell you all that since it is capable of gaining release from the sorrowful saṁsāra.

5. After doing all the rituals which you referred to, Śānti

should be performed for me for the well-being of the whole country.

6. At the close of the rituals, one should kneel down on the floor.

7. Then *Namo nārāyaṇāya* should be uttered and the following mantra recited:

8. I resort to you, O Lord, saviour from the ocean of saṁsāra. O handsome one, you have come to me again.

9. Look at the directions, look below, protect me from all ills.

10. Be pleased to bestow always peace and happiness to this country with the king and his army, to pregnant women, to old men, to Brahmins and cows and to the cereals.

11. Give abundance of food, bring plentiful rain, prosperity and freedom from fear. Let the nation progress, O Lord, let there be peace for ever.

12. For gods, Brahmins, devotees, maidens, animals and other beings, let there be peace for ever.

13. After reciting this Śānti, my devotee shall offer a handful of water and recite the following mantra:

14. "O Vāsudeva, may you who are the originator of all the worlds, the witness in all sacrifices and the spirit in all the gods, give us peace and release from saṁsāra."

15. This is the best attainment, the best fame, the best energy, the best gain and the best path.

16. He who recites this auspicious Śānti in all seriousness, gets merged in me without rebirth.

17. After reciting this Śānti, is the occasion for madhuparka. *Namo nārāyaṇāya* should be uttered and the following mantra recited:

18. "O Lord, the greatest of all gods, the venerable one with the name Madhuparka, be pleased to come here and remain in this vessel for my deliverance."

19. (The madhuparka should be) in a vessel made of Udumbara wood and should consist of equal parts of honey, curds and ghee. If honey is not available, gur may be used.

20. If ghee is liberally available, it may be mixed with fried rice. If curd is not available, milk may be substituted.

21. Thus curds, honey and ghee may be mixed in equal

qualities uttering 'O Lord, I am offering you curd, honey and ghee."

22. For the benefit of all, my devotee may take it in his hand and recite the following mantra:

23. "You who created from the navel, you who are to be invoked by mantras in all sacrifices, receive this offering named madhuparka meant for you."

24. He who offers it to me in this manner, attains the merit of all sacrifices and goes to my world.

25. I shall now tell you another thing about this, O Earth, Please listen.

26. This should be administered in proper form with mantra to a dying devotee of mine.

27. This reliever from saṁsāra may be given to my devotee who is dying after doing good deeds all his life.

28. Seeing such a person in the throes of death, a devotee should take madhuparka in his hand and recite the following mantra:

29. "May you, O Nārāyaṇa, the most important in all the worlds, who remain in everybody, be pleased to accept this madhuparka brought by the devotee".

30. Madhuparka should be given to him with this mantra. Given at the time of death, it gives release from saṁsāra.

31. O fortunate one, I have told you thus about madhuparka which no one else knows.

32. Madhuparka should be given by those desirous of accomplishments. Given after worshipping the great Lord, it brings about release from saṁsāra.

33. One who gives madhuparka attains beatituds, because it is pure and removes all desires.

34. It should be given to a holy preceptor by the devoted pupil. Never should it be given to the ignorant or immodest.

35. He who listens to this purifying account of madhuparka, also attains beatitude.

36. I have told you thus everything about madhuparka for the sake of release from saṁsāra for those that wish for it.

37. Those who recite this Śānti in the king's gateway, the cremation ground, or when in fear or sorrow, get relief.

38. The man without son gets one, the man without a wife

gets one, the woman without a husband gets one, and the person who is bound gets release.

39. O Earth, I have told you about this great Śānti, which is of a highly secret nature and gets release, from saṁsāra.

40. He who performs Śānti in this manner, gives up all attachments and goes to my world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYTHREE

Departure of Naciketas

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1-5. King Janamejaya, the last of the Kuru line, after completing the twelve-year-long expiation for his killing a Brahmin after the performance of Aśvamedha sacrifice, impelled by his own action and very much worried, approached Vaiśampāyana, the great sage, disciple of Vyāsa, living on the bank of Gaṅgā, soon after he had finished his morning rites, and spoke to him in great repentance.

Janamejaya said:

6. O sage, when I think more and more about the deeds of man, I feel convinced how we have to face their results unavoidably.

7. I therefore, wish to know, of what kind is the abode of Yama, how extensive it is and how one sees it on going there.

8. Also how I can avoid going to that place of the king of the dead, the king of dharma who directs the whole world.

Sūta said:

9. Asked thus by the king, the sage replied in sweet voice.

Vaiśampāyana said:

10-11. O king, listen to this old story, which is auspicious, conducive to dharma and fame, purifying, bringing about good, the favourite of the learned and narrated in Itihāsas and Purāṇas.

12. In days of yore, there was a great sage by name Uddālaka who had mastered the Veda with all its accessories.

13. He had a son by name Naciketas who was a yogi, very intelligent and virtuous and a master of Vedic lore.

14. But he was cursed by the angry father to quickly go to Yama and see him.

15. The brilliant son said 'yes', meditated for a while and entered into yoga.

16. Soon he became invisible and told his father in great humility:

17-18. "O virtuous father, your words can never go false. I am, therefore, leaving for the glorious abode of Yama, the lord of dharma. But, doubtless, I shall return here".

The father said:

19. You are my only son and I have no other relative. So let it be false, against dharma or affecting your fame. (Please do not go).

20. You will be able to save me although I have said something wrong in my anger, and it is true that he who utters something unbecoming mercilessly in anger defiles his entire family.

21. I who cursed you, the virtuous boy thus, have become so defiled as not to be deserving of being spoken to.

22. I have become one who does not say the proper thing, but I don't wish any outrage on dharma.

23. O you good son, you have always been obedient, composed, forbearing and devoted to dharma. You have been sincerely attending on me and you alone are capable of enabling me to gain liberation.

24. I, therefore, earnestly request you not to go there.

25. If lord Yama happens to see you there even accidentally, he will never release you in his anger.

26. Know, then, that I will perish as one who has cut off the family line, condemned by all as a base sinner.

27. Hell is horrible and it is known as 'put'. The son is 'putra' because he saves the father from this.

28. Whatever penance the son performs, whatever he gifts and whatever he offers in fire, all that nourish his ancestors. To one without a son this is not there.

29. One may be a Śūdra engaged in service (prescribed for him), a Vaiśya engaged in cultivation, a Kṣatriya engaged in protection of the produce, or a Brāhmaṇa doing his deeds.

30. He may perform intense penance and make munificent gifts. But if he is without a son, he never attains heaven. So have I heard.

31. A father gets gratification through his son, a grandfather through his grandson and a great-grand-father through the son of the grandson.

32. I shall not let you go, the potential continuer of our family line. So I implore you in all earnestness not to go there.

Vaiśampāyana said:

33. The virtuous son spoke with composure and pleasure to the wailing father.

The son said:

34. "Don't be sorrowful, O father, you will see me return here. After seeing that god (Yama) who is revered by all, I shall certainly return to you, for I have no fear of the god of death.

35. That king (of the dead) will honour me because of your compassion.

36. You remain in truth and uphold truth. Truth is the ladder to heaven as the boat is the means of crossing the ocean.

37. The sun shines by truth, the fire blazes by truth and the earth remains firm by truth.

38. The sea does not advance over the shore because of truth; the mantra produces its wholesome effect over the world because of truth.

39. The sacrifices with their purifying mantras and honoured worship rest in truth. The Vedas sound by truth. The whole world is set in truth.

40. The Sāman sings by truth. Everything is established in truth. Heaven is truth, so too dharma. There is nothing outside truth.

41. O father, I have learnt that everything is got by truth. There is nothing that transcends truth.

42. It is well known that Brahmā, the very repository of the

Vedas, was banished by Rudra remaining in truth and Brahmā remains in austerity controlled by him.

43. Similarly, Agni was thrown into the mouth of the submarine horse by Aurva remaining in truth.

44. O father, all the worlds and gods were held by the valiant Saṁvarta out of compassion for gods.

45. Bali remains in the netherworld, protecting truth.

46. The great mountain Vindhya with hundreds of its rising peaks, does not grow because of truth. The whole world, with all its moving and statonary beings, goes on in truth.

47. All the duties of the householder, those of the Vānaprastha and the rules of all austerities are based on truth.

48. If a thousand Aśvamedhas and truth are weighed against each other, it is truth that weighs more.

49. Dharma is ruled by truth, and dharma protects when itself is protected. Therefore, follow truth and save yourself by your own self."

50-51. Having said this cheerfully, the effulgent and truthful son of the sage, resorted to his power of yoga attained by penance and reached the place of king Yama.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYFOUR

The return of Naciketas

Vaiśampāyana said:

1. On reaching the place of that inaccessible king (Yama), Naciketas was duly honoured and let off.

2. O king, when the sage saw his son returned, he was extremely delighted. He embraced him, smelt his head and filled the earth and sky with his shouts of joy.

3. Then he called the other sages and told them.

4. "O great sages with divine lustre, see the greatness of my son. He has gone to the abode of Yama and quickly returned here.

5. I am seeing him alive because of good luck, filial affection and service to elders.

6. There is none in this world as blessed as I am, because my son has returned here after falling into the jaws of death.

7. (Then he asked the son). You were not beaten or bound in the abode of Yama ? Your path was unhampered when you were going there ?

8. The horrible diseases did not pursue you there ? What strange things did you see there ? Were you happy ?

9. Did you see the king of the dead ? Did he see you with his eyes ?

10. Was he glad that you went there on your own accord ? And did he let you return so soon ?

11. You didn't have to face the harassment by the fierce doorkeepers there ? And even though released by the king, the others there didn't do you any harm ?

12. You found it possible to get a way to enter there and also to get out of it ? (He then turned to sages again and said:) My son has now come back to me. The gods are pleased.

13. So also the venerable sages and the pious Brahmins, in that my son has returned from the world of Yama".

14. Hearing him say like this, the sages there flocked to him giving up their vows and observances.

15-17. Those performing Japa or worshipping deities, others standing with thrown-up arms, yet others remaining on one foot and gazing the sun, still others worshipping fire, all of them hastily gathered to see Naciketas.

18-19. Naked sages, those remaining within heaps of stones, those in vow of silence, those eating the fallen leaves and water, those that torment themselves in fire, all these stood around him.

20. Some sat down, some remained standing, but all wanted to ask him many things.

21-22. Seeing Naciketas who had returned from Yama's world, some were afraid, some were glad, some were inquisitive, some were indifferent and others were full of doubts. But they all together asked him:

The sages said:

23. O Naciketas, the intelligent son observing dharma, the truthful boy devoted to serving the elders,

24. Tell us in truth what you have seen or heard (in Yama-

loka). All of us are eager to know it, particularly your father.

25. Even if it is a secret, you should tell us when asked, because you can see how full of fear all of us are.

26. By the māyā of Kāla the dead are never seen again. Man gets the result of whatever action he does.

27. Whatever action, good or bad, one does here, the result of it accrues in the other world.

28. We see the working of māyā of Kāla in that beings become dead and also become born.

29. Those who think about it do not find a solution since the whole world is engulfed in the darkness of desire and stupefaction. What is necessary is not thought upon, what is pleasurable is gone after.

30. What does Citragupta do there and what does he blabber ?

31. What is the appearance of Dharmarāja and what is Kāla like ? What form do the diseases have there and how do they act ?

32. By what action is one released from there and what are the deeds to be done ? That is the final resort of the whole world and nothing can be transgressed there.

33. People who know about (good and bad) actions speak of angry bindings, torments, draggings and cuttings there.

34. What befalls pure souls there and what befalls sinners ?

35. We ask all this out of affection and friendliness. Tell us in detail what actually you have seen, heard or understood.

Vaiśampāyana said:

36. O Janamejaya, listen now to what Naciketas said in reply to what the sages asked him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYFIVE

The sinners in Yamaloka

Naciketas said:

1. O ascetic Brahmins, I shall tell you what you seek to know. Listen. Bow to Lord Dharmarāja.

2. I tell you briefly and according to my ability. Liars, molesters of animals, women and children,

3. Killers of Brahmins, deceivers, the obstinate, the ungrateful, those fond of the wives of others,

4. Those who outrage the modesty of maidens, defilers of Veda, those who harass the people following Vaidik path,

5. Sacrificers on behalf of Śūdras, condemned Brahmins, performers of sacrifices for those who are ineligible, those afflicted by leprosy,

6. Those who drink liquor, the Brahmins who kill other Brahmins or warriors, those that live on usury, those crooked in sight,

7. Those who give up their mother, father or wife, those that have ill-will towards their preceptors, those of bad conduct, messengers who speak indistinct,

8. Encroachers upon houses and fields, destroyers of bridges, people without children, without wife, those without the necessary attention in their deeds,

9. The unclean, the merciless, harassers, vow-breakers, sellers of soma, the henpecked, those that sell everything,

10. Speakers of falsehood, teachers of Veda for money, teachers of out-castes, the astrologers, the fortune-tellers,

11. Cohabiters of all including those prohibited, magicians, balance-holders,

12. Doers of actions without the idea of sin, those that harbour strong enmity, those that do not stake their life for the master, those averse to battle,

13. Those that steal others' wealth, assassinators, those justifying sinful actions, those earning their living by fire,

14. Those that do not serve others as prescribed, anchorites committing sin, makers of vessels,

15. Those selling things in temples, inns and tīrthas, those who speak against vows, those that speak untruth,

16. Those who grow hair and nails simply to appear as sannyāsins, crooked persons, those who make false documents,

17. Those who do not observe austerities though out of ignorance, those banished from hermitages, those who receive every offering, those who defile sacred places,

18. The quarrelsome, the cruel and thousands of others were there.

19. Now hear what women and men do on going to Yama's place.

Vaiśampāyana said:

20. Hearing these words of Naciketas, the sages were wonderstruck and they asked him again.

The sages said:

21. O you, the best among the learned, tell us about everything there as seen by you.

22. Of what nature is Kāla because of whom the whole world continues.

23. The selfish person who performs actions in this world is not allowed entry in the world of Brahmā.

24. Although tormented and burnt till the end of the aeon, there is no loss to the body in that place,

25. Torture is applied again and again according to the nature of the action, and one has to suffer it. No Brahmin will dare to go there because of fear.

26. One avoids going there by giving gifts and performing austerities.

27. What is the nature of Vaitaraṇī? What is the sort of water that flows in it? How is the hell Raurava and how is the deceptive Śālmalī tree? How are the messengers there and what do they do?

28. What should a person do to shield himself from all this by his merit acquired previously?

29. Being under the influence of sin, courage is lost, and even those that are sinless get stupefied.

30. What should be known is not known nor what is virtue and what is not. The thinking faculty is lost because of sin.

31. Due to illusion what is the supreme is not known and many toil there having committed sin.

32. Please tell us about all this as you have seen with your own eyes.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYSIX

The city of Yama

Vaiśampāyana said:

1. Hearing these words of the great sages, he began to tell them everything in detail.

Naciketas said:

2. O great sages, listen to me. The city of the god of death is one thousand yojanas in breadth, double that in length and double that in perimeter.

3. It is full of mansions, golden spires and beautiful rows of buildings.

4. It has got a golden fort also of great height.

5. The houses there shine like the Kailāsa mountain. Rivers flow there full of spotless water.

6. There are beautiful lakes, lotus-ponds and pools; also tanks and wells.

7. It is full of men and women and elephants and horses of different kinds and from different places.

8. We find there every kind of living being. Here and there battles and single combats are also seen.

9-10. Hundreds of thousands of people are there, some singing, some laughing, some sorrowing, some playing, some eating, some sleeping, some dancing, some standing and some remaining bound.

11. In accordance with their actions, some are found big and some small.

12. My limbs become languid and the mind becomes disturbed when I think further. Still, a divine feeling comes upon me. So I shall tell you what I have seen and heard.

13. There is an important river named Puṣpodakā (flowery water) full of all sorts of trees on the bank, but it is (alternately) seen and not seen.

14. There are golden flights of steps in it and it is full of golden sand.

15. Its water is placid, cool and sweet-smelling. On its banks are groves of flowering and fruit-bearing trees with numerous birds on them.

16. That great river flows there removing all sins. I saw thousands of trees on its sides.

17. The gods play in its water. The Gandharvas seem to be singing Sāman there with their wives.

18. The Nāga and Kinnara women sing and play there.

19. Thousands of divine damsels play in this manner in the water and in the mansions.

20. There are many trees whose branches bear fruits and flowers at all times, and birds flock there to get what they need.

21. Beautiful women with lovely girdles provide delight to men there to their heart's content.

22. They splash the water with their lovers and sweetly sing with inebriation.

23. With the splashing of water and jingling of jewels, the river appears to be decked with divine gems.

24. The great and auspicious river named Vaivasvatī beautifully flows in the middle of the city, protecting it like a mother her son.

25. Swans, white like the jasmine and the moon, gracefully move about in its sands in the midst of the charming water.

26. With fine Cakravākas and lotuses with golden carpets and with attractive golden flights of steps, it is very resplendent.

27. Its water is clear, pure, sweet-smelling and very tasty like ambrosia. The trees in the forests on the banks are full of flowers and fruits.

28. Inebriated beautiful women play in it as much as they like but they never get weary.

29. It is worshipped by gods and sages. With its plentiful water, it is like the weighty words of poets pregnant with meaning.

30. There is an image of the river erected there, on which numerous people pour water (in reverence). The lofty rows of buildings on the bank inspire wonder.

31. In the fine groves there women gather in large numbers and sing playing instruments and beating tāla.

32. They provide great pleasure to the gods in heaven with their fine voice mixed with the sound of the drum, the lute and the flute.

33. They never get satisfied with playing in the balconies from where the wind wafts the scent of Agaru and sandal.

34. In some places the scent spreads in such an intense manner as to block entry there, in some other places people engage themselves with playthings, and in yet other places the music of women fills the air.

35. Some play with their beloveds in golden pedestals. Some play in the water with great delight.

36. The different items of beauty there cannot be recounted even if we take a number of days for it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINTYSEVEN

Yama and his associates

The sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1-2. There is a hundred-tiered gateway in the north, ten yojanas in breadth and double that in length, with a fort on the sides, shining prominently and so tall as to appear as a scraping the sky.

3. It is highly lustrous and provided with several contrivances. This is the entrance for gods, sages and others (of their category) who do good and virtuous deeds.

4. There is another gateway (on the east), white like a heap of autumn clouds. It is the entrance for (ordinary) human beings who have acquired merit.

5-6. Built of iron and highly hot is the gateway in the south, terrific in appearance.

7. The son of the Sun (Yama) has assigned this entrance for all sinners and killers.

8. Made of Udumbara and very much uneven is the gateway in the west.

9. It always glows with fire and is difficult to look at. It is meant for those that do bad and prohibited deeds.

10-11. In that beautiful city, there is a jewelled assembly hall constructed by Yama.

12. Therein is the seat of justice occupied by saints who are truthful and virtuous and free from anger, desire and attachment.

13. That is the assembly where justice is dispensed for the righteous as well as sinful, for good as well as bad, according to the store of result of the actions performed.

14. These judges decide the merit of actions according to Śāstra, taking their stand on *dharma* and without doubt, fear or favour.

15. They consider matters from a universal point of view according to Śāstra and their observation.

16. All of them think well on the matter with full restraint and in all seriousness.

17. (The judges are) Manu, Prajāpati, Pārāśarya (Vyāsa), Atri, Auddālaki, Āpastamba, Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Gautama,

18. Śaṅkha, Likhita, Aṅgiras, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Pulaha and other law-givers.

19. Along with Yama they think of the justice to be dispensed. The divine as well as human among them are dispassionate.

20. One among them stands out with kuṇḍala (on the ears), aṅgada (on the wrists) and mukuṭa (on the head) and he is the effulgent Brahmadatta.

21. He is so brilliant in his appearance and speech that he appears like the single embodiment of all the rest.

22. By his side stand the great divine sages steeped in Veda and Vedāṅga.

23. They discuss the meaning of Veda, truth and dharma, and also about Śikṣā, Chandas and other Śāstras.

24. They also discuss Nirukta, the Sāman music, alchemy and everything else pertaining to Veda.

25. I saw there in the palace of Dharmarāja sages and manes reciting auspicious stories.

26. Near there, I saw one black in colour, with projecting cheek, erect hair and uncouth form,

27. With face ugly, canines protruding, full of anger and generating fear, holding a big cane in the left hand.

28. He is the eternal Kāla who listens to Dharmarāja whenever ordered to execute punishment. There are others also there to carry out such orders.

29. I saw there a resplendent female form worshipped by Yama with celestial sandal and other unguents.

30. She is the destroyer of the worlds and there is nothing beyond her.

31. None has ever suggested any means to go beyond her. The Asuras and even the sages are afraid of her.

32. She is worshipped by gods and demons and also by yogins.

33. It is from her body that the oppressing ailments arise, as also the dreadful diseases brought about by time.

34. I then saw the god of death who is full of valour, but cruel and angry.

35. He is full of strength and lustre. Age and death do not affect him,

36. Along with the god of death are many that sing and laugh and excite life.

37. Some there glow with divine ornaments, chowries and umbrellas.

38. Some I saw there installed in seats and worshipped.

39. In many places there I saw serious fevers and severe pains in the form of men and women.

40. There were fierce women, the embodiments of desire and anger, consuming life.

41. The sound of their conversation near Dharmarāja seemed to break the earth.

42. (I saw there) Rākṣasas big and small who eat flesh, some having both feet, but some single-footed, some with three feet, some with many feet;

43. Some with both hands, but some with a single hand, some with three hands and some with many hands; so too some with small ears, and some with ears as big as elephants.

44. Some people were wearing many kinds of ornaments like keyūra and mukuṭa.

45. Some had garlands and some anklets. Some were holding axe, some mace, some disc, some trident.

46. Some had spear, some javelin, some bow, some sword and some club.

47. Some were holding curd in hand, some sandal, some varieties of food and some clothes.

48. Some were holding incense and some different kinds of garments.

49. There were palanquins and various vehicles to which were yoked horses, elephants and swans.

50. There were śarabhas, bulls, elephants, peacocks, cranes, cakravākas and horses. I saw all this. But there were fearful things also.

51. While some were well dressed, some were shabbily dressed. Some wore fresh silk and while some wore torn cloth. Some spoke well while others were dumb. Some were out to kill others.

52. Some were tawny and some black. Some were for dharma and some for fame. These were in attendance on Yama.

53. So if the Brahmin performs the sacrifices, he will not have any disappointment.

54. Those who deserve honour should be duly honoured. When they get pleased, all good results.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYEIGHT

Torments in Hell

Naciketas said:

1. Yama, the god of the dead, gave me audience in his assembly.

2. He duly honoured me with seat, *pādya* and *arghya* according to Vedic rites.

3. He then asked me to sit in a golden seat on which were strewn darbha grass and flowers.

4. His face which is always terrific, became calm as I was looking at it.

5. Due to his kindness for me, his reddish eyes soon became gentle like lotus petals.

6. His attitude created confidence in me and I became glad.

7. Then issued from my mouth a hymn in his praise which removes all sins, brings about all desires, confers fame and is commended even by gods.

8. Yama, the great upholder of dharma, was pleased at this.

The sage's son (Naciketas) said:

9. O four-footed lord, the god of the manes, you are the ordainer and sustainer of Śrāddha. I bow to you.

10. O Dharmarāja, the great god of the dead, you are the

knower of time, the knower of whatever that is done, and one wedded to truth. I bow to you.

11. You are action and the actuator of action. You are the lord of past, present and future. You are the purifier as well as the stupefier. You are the essence as well as elaboration. O uneven-eyed holder of rod and noose, I bow to you.

12. O you resplendent like the sun, the observer of the life of all, black in complexion, indomitable, having the form of sesamum oil, I bow to you.

13. You are lustrous like the sun, you are the carrier of offerings to gods as well as to the manes. You are a mighty lord. I bow to you.

14. You are destroyer of sins, you stand in austerity, you are ever the guardian of Śrāddha, you are a great ascetic. With one eye transformed into many you are Kāla and Death. I bow to you.

15. Sometimes you appear with a rod, sometimes with a fully shaven head, sometimes as the fearful Kāla, sometimes as a boy, sometimes as an old man, sometimes in a form that strikes terror, I bow to you.

16. The world is controlled by you through dharma. You see to this directly and, without you, dharma cannot be accomplished.

17. You are the god of gods, the penance among penances and the japa among japas. In this I don't find anyone other than you.

18-19. You never attempt to push down from here sages without any relations or friends and chaste women in distress engaged in penance.

20. So, among all gods, you are the greatest upholder of dharma.

Vaiśampāyana said:

21. Listening to this hymn uttered by the son of sage Uddālaka, Yama was extremely pleased.

Yama said:

22. I am delighted at your sweet hymn. May good befall you. Tell me frankly what I may do for you.

23. O Brahmin, ask of me any boon you like, whether it be prosperity or health or longevity.

The sage's son (Naciketas) said:

24. "O great lord, I desire neither death nor life. If you, who look after the welfare of all, are pleased with me and wish to grant me a boon, then let me see this entire region of yours as it is.

25. If you are inclined to give me a boon, then show me the whole thing so as to know what befalls the good people and what befalls the sinners.

26-27. Show me also, O lord, Citragupta who considers on your behalf what is to be meted out to whom according to the particular action done by each."

28. When I said thus, he called the man at the door and said "Take this Brahmin safely to Citragupta.

29. Tell him that he should treat him in a fitting manner and do what he desires."

30. I was then quickly led by that attendant to the presence of Citragupta.

31. He rose up and, thinking for a while, welcomed me saying 'O great sage, make yourself quite at ease here'.

32. Telling me thus, he gave instructions to his fierce-looking servants who were remaining there with folded hands.

Citragupta said:

33. "Listen to me, O my devoted and dutiful servants,

34. With my permission, this Brahmin is going to the place where the dead reside. He should be well concealed and carefully guarded.

35. He should not have anything to feel unhappy. He should not have fatigue either from heat or from cold; nor should he suffer for food or drink. I command you so.

36. This Brahmin who is full of compassion for all beings and is following the wish of his father, has been granted such a boon by me.

37. Let him see this city of Dharmarāja as much as he likes." So saying he asked me to go and see it.

38. The attendants were asked to lead me there. (Going

there I saw) mighty beings running and chasing people and beating, binding and burning them.

39. They break their bones by beating them again and again with bamboo sticks and often with more heavy objects.

40. With broken bones and bruised heads, the people piteously cry aloud, but find none to help them.

41. In deep and dark abysses, many are scorched in fire and also used as fuel for the fire.

42. Some fall in boiling oil, some in molten lime as the result of their own evil deeds.

43. They are severely tortured again and again.

44. Some are put into machines and crushed like sesamum and blood flows out profusely from them.

45. There is the horrible river Vaitaraṇī with eddy and foam, difficult to cross for sinful persons.

46. Hundreds of people are held by the feet, thrown over the trident and then thrown into Vaitaraṇī.

47. Hundreds of people in their curdled blood are bitten by numerous snakes.

48. When they sink in the river unable to cross it, whirlpools and ripples arise there in abundance.

49. The sinful people get parched there, sinking and vomitting, but find none to save them.

50. Many are thrown over the deceptive Śālmalī tree, full of metallic nails and severely beaten again and again with swords and spears.

51. I saw in its branches, a large number of goblins and demons furiously hanging down.

52. Those thrown over the tree move to the branches, being unable to bear the pain of piercing nails.

53-54. The demons in the branches then pounce upon them swiftly like monkeys in big trees and eat them up.

55. I could hear the crushing sound like that of a mleccha eating fowl.

56-57. They eat them in their fierce mouths as if these were ripe mango fruits and after sipping the marrow also, throw down on the ground their skeletal form.

58. Those in the forests also are similarly handled.

59-60. The sinners standing below in large numbers implore

the servants of Yama to leave them in mercy, but they are only further tortured.

61. Hit by showers of stones and choked by clouds of dust, many rush to the shade of the tree, only to find there scorching fire.

62. They are then beaten up and thrown in blazing fire.

63. Many request these attendants to be pleased to give them a pot of cold water.

64. But what is given to them is boiling water by drinking which they get scalded and cry aloud.

65. In their agony they fall down clasping one another. So do many others becoming unconscious due to hunger.

66. But there is also sumptuous sweet-smelling food in heaps.

67. There is curd and milk, sesamum cakes and milky soup, also honey and liquor.

68. There is fruit juice of various kinds and cool and fragrant drinks.

69. There are also drinks mixed with milk, ghee or curd. All these await the good souls going there.

70. We find there for them incense and fine sandal paste. Everything is inviting and abundant.

71. For serving food for these souls there are handsome women well ornamented.

72. They hold basketful of fruits in their hands and keep flowers and water for *pādya*. They are graceful with jingling anklets.

73. They serve food for thousands of them.

74. While these women honour the virtuous in this way, the servants of Yama beat the sinners under their control, laugh at them and say:

75. "O you ungrateful, avaricious, adulterous wretches,

76. Evil in mind, bad in action, reluctant to gifts, active to speak ill of others, conversing only with sinners,

77. Shamelessly ready to ask from others. When you were affluent on earth, you never gave anything, food, drink or fuel.

78. Therefore it is that all these torments are imposed on you.

79. When the effects of your misdeeds are over, you will be released from here to be born again on earth in misery.

80. The sinners are born in poor families in human world with the sins adhering in them.

81. But those that have lived an irreproachable life, particularly those belonging to the four castes, being truthful, peaceful compassionate and virtuous,

82. Rest here for sometime with their followers, and then go to the supreme abode or are born on earth again in a high family,

83. Affluent, well ordered, full of beautiful women and then attain supreme bliss."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETYNINE

Torments in Hell (Contd.)

The Sage's son Naciketas said:

1. The entire ground there is strewn with iron nails and is rugged and dark.

2. The sinners with their hands, feet and head bruised, are not able to leave that place for long.

3. But only the sinners are thrown there. Those who are devoted to dharma and have control of self, remain there as in their homes.

4. Beautiful women wait upon them with sumptuous food and cool drinks.

5. The sinners are thrown on hard and burning rocks.

6. They are shown places with trees and as they run to go there with feet and waist scorched,

7. The servants of Yama rush there and harass them. There is none to save them from the torment.

8. Then there are others who are bitten by ferocious dogs from head to foot and they cry aloud again and again.

9-10. In another place fierce beings with projecting canines, pierce the sinful souls with needles and leave them without food and water, when they are hungry and thirsty, for the sin incurred by them in refusing these essentials to those in need.

11. A cruel woman of a body of brandished steel embraces a man and chases him when he runs away.

12. She tells him: "I am (the combined form of) your sister, daughter-in-law,

13. Maternal aunt, paternal aunt, uncle's wife, preceptor's wife, friend's wife, brother's wife, king's wife,

14. The wives of Vaidikas and Brahmins, all of whom you have molested. You cannot escape from me even if you go to the nether world.

15. For the wrong you have done, I am going to thrash you. O shameless man, why do you try to run away?"

16. She chases him again and tells him repeatedly:

17. "Even if born among thousands of learned men, a sinner is tormented in this manner,

18. I, therefore, a low woman, embrace you. Why do you cry ?

19. When I lead you like this, don't you feel ashamed to entreat me with folded hands ?

20. Why do you try to get away ? wherever you go in this abode of Yama, I will pursue you, as you have outraged the modesty of another's wife."

21. (In another place) people are beaten with iron rods like cowherds beating the kine with sticks.

22. Some are bitten by tigers, lions, jackals, donkeys and dogs and some pecked by crows.

23. There is a grove of palms of swords enveloped by flames and fumes, resembling a conflagration and glowing all around.

24. The sinners are thrown there by Yama's men and scorched.

25. When they run from there to the trees in the grove of palms of swords, they are cut again and again.

26. Thus dragged and burnt and mutilated, they cry aloud.

27. The noble souls that stand at the entrance to the grove of palms of swords, chastise the sinners.

28. "O you sinners who have destroyed the bridge of dharma for that very reason you have to undergo torments in thousands.

29. After all this, if at all you are born as human beings, it will be in extremely poor families and you will always be in misery."

30. (In another place) there are birds resembling tongues of fire and raising loud cries. Their beaks are of iron.

31. These as well as carnivorous animals like tigers and wild dogs angrily bite the sinners.

32-33. I saw the mighty servants of Yama throwing many persons in this grove of palms of swords which is full of tigers and bears and innumerable worms and ants.

34. Some were bruised by swords and others pierced by tridents.

35. There were thousands of wells, pools, ponds, lakes and rivers, all of blood.

36. O great sages, I saw also places full of marrow, flesh and faeces.

37. In them were put numerous sinners who have not only to put up with their foul smell, but also to dip themselves in them again and again.

38. Cranes from above make showers of blood, bones and stones upon them.

39. I could hear the pitiable cries of those who were floating in them or running out of them and they were bound and beaten again.

40. Their wailings filled the entire place.

41. Bound in some places, blocked in others, struck in yet others and thrown up in still others, their pitiable cries could be heard everywhere.

42. I saw certain other things in certain other places, the very thought of which will make one shudder.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED

Torments in Hell (Contd.)

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1-2. There are eight hells where the sinners are tormented, namely, Tapta, Mahātapta, Raurava, Mahāraurava, Saptatāla, Kālasūtra, Andhakāra and Andhakāravara.

3-4. They are first taken to the first, then to the second where the duration is twice, from there to the third where the duration is thrice, from there to the fourth where the duration is four

times, then to the fifth where the duration is five times, then to the sixth where the duration is six times, then to the seventh where the duration is seven times and then to the eighth where the duration is eight times.

5. The dead go there in the course of a single day and night and for those of them afflicted by sin, there is only misery and more misery.

6. There is only misery there and no pleasure. The misery goes on increasing. There is no means at all there to get even a little happiness.

7. Man, after death, is left there. There are no killers there, but he never gets pleasure through any of the senses—sound, touch, colour, taste or smell.

8. He never gets pleasure, physical or mental. All that is there is sorrow lone.

9. The earth there is full of hot and sharp iron nails and the sky is covered with flocks of birds with fiery tongues.

10. Hunger is there much, so too thirst. But what is hot is too hot and what is cold is too cold (to eat or drink).

11. When one wishes to drink water, one is taken by the Rākṣasas to a pond having lotus and lilies and swans and cranes.

12. But on reaching there in all eagerness, one finds the water boiling hot.

13. The Rākṣasas then bring cooked meat, but throw it in a pond of brackish water.

14. (When one enters the pond for taking it) one is bitten by the numerous fish there.

15. At the end of the assigned period, when one tries to run away, one gets the body fleshy for being tormented again.

16. Whether sitting at the top or leaving or running, serious torment is absolutely certain.

17. There is the abominable Kumbhīpāka which is a deep pit of dung shaped like a lotus leaf.

18. The Rākṣasas thrash the sinners there biting their lips in anger and exclaiming aloud.

19. There is a forest of swords and another of red lead. The latter is strewn with red hot sand.

20. There the sinners are burnt, cut, struck, hit, thrashed, dragged and dismembered.

21. Black and spotted dogs bite them, so too do serpents and scorpions.

22. There is the deceptive Śālmalī tree with its numerous projecting thorns. They are dragged there till the body is left with bones alone.

23. All the torment and adversity for the sinner arise soon.

24. When he wants coolness, he gets heat and when he wants warmth he gets coldness. When he desires pleasure, what he gets is sorrow. Pleasure he never can have.

25. He always receives injuries in thousands all over his body and at all times.

26. A furious river full of ferocious animals, has to be crossed.

27. This is named Karambhavālukā. It is a hundred yojanas in length and is like blazing fire.

28. Then there is the big river Vaitaraṇī of bitter water, fifty yojanas long and five yojanas deep.

29. It is deep in mud and is full of skin, flesh and bones. There are in it big scorpions with sharp teeth.

30. There are owls as big as bows and ferocious and poisonous with tongues sharp enough to break bones.

31. Somehow crossing this river of deep mud, some manage to reach the empty and supportless abodes there,

32. Where, however, they are devoured by numerous rats leaving but the skeleton.

33. But in the morning the body gets flesh again as soon as the wind wafts over it.

34. Then there is a mango-grove where ferocious birds feed on the man eating up all his skin and flesh and veins, eyes and years.

35. On the south, at a distance of three yojanas, is a banyan tree which glows always like an evening cloud.

36. There is a big fire-place called Yamacullī, ten yojanas deep.

37. It always burns and is ever blinding with its smoke.

38. Thousands of dead are thrown into it incessantly by the Rākṣasas, servants of Yama. In this fire-place they are to remain for a month.

39. Then there is the river called Śakunikā which is full of fat and morrow.

40. This proceeds from the interior of the Yamacullī. On crossing this, there are seven kinds of torments to be undergone.

41. Every one of these is extremely painful, but the sinner has to go through them in their order.

42. There are ten Śūlas and thirteen Kumbhīpākas where one whole day and night should be spent.

43. The merciless and fearful Rākṣasas hold the sinners in tridents and bake them over glowing cinders.

44. They are then held head down-wards over clouds of choking smoke and then fried in hot oil in big vessels.

45. They are then held over the fire of burning marrow in a pit of dried cowdung. This is done for ten days in each.

46. When these seven kinds of torments are over, they are taken to the river 'Yama' at a distance of three yojanas wherein flows molten lead.

47. Crossing it with burnt body and completely unconscious, they get rest there for a while.

48. They see a beautiful pond with cool water and shady trees around. They get there whatever they want, because this is the sister of Yama.

49. All the sinners get food and drink there, but all this is forgotten after spending three days there.

50. Then there is the mountain called Śūlagraha which extends over a hundred yojanas. It is constituted of a single rock and no being lives in it.

51. The clouds shower hot water on it and people traverse it with difficulty in the course of a day.

52. There is the Śṛṅgāṭaka forest which is full of biting black flies.

53. The bite of these flies transforms one into a worm. One has to face there showers of flesh and blood.

54-55. Traversing this, the sinner goes to another place of torment where he sees his sons, mother, father, wife and other dear ones. But he is bound and can only helplessly cry.

56. "O son, save me, save me," he cries, but what he gets then is beatings with clubs, rods and bamboo sticks, knocks with the fist, blows with whips and bitings by snakes.

57. Unable to bear all this pain, he swoons.

58. The sinners get here this sort of treatment again and again.

59. Those who commit the five heinous sins, necessarily reach this place.

60. When the punishments for these sins are undergone, one becomes a stationary being.

61. After a period in that form, the dead man is born as an animal.

62. But this is after his life in hell for sixty thousand and sixty hundred years.

63. When the effects of his actions are over, he becomes a being born of sweat and undergoes all its life-process.

64. He then takes birth as a bird, then as a cow and afterwards as a man.

65. Among men he is first born as a Śūdra and after a proper life as a Śūdra, takes birth as a Vaiśya endowed with the result of all actions.

66. After his life as a Vaiśya, he is born as a Kṣatriya and after that as a Brāhmaṇa.

67. If, after taking birth as a Brāhmaṇa, he commits sins again and debases himself with evil mind and self-ruinous actions, he gets afflictions physical and mental.

68. As a result of his actions, he develops a tendency to Brāhminicide, becomes a leper, squint-eyed and crow-voiced.

69. He gets protruding teeth, develops foul odour in his body and gets a bent of mind to drink liquor, kill the parents and murder the king.

70. He also becomes a stealer of gold, and, in short, one similar to a killer of Brahmin.

71. In another place in hell, I could see sinners badly mutilated as a result of their own actions, and blood flowing everywhere.

72. The whole place is full of such people who groan again and again.

73. There frequently arise cries of those who are bound in various ways and beaten.

74. They are tormented by beatings with iron rods and pricking weapons.

75. This is done till those engaged in this get tired.

76. When they are thus tired, they make a report to Citragupta.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND ONE

Fight between Rākṣasas and Yama's men

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. Then Yama's men of different forms gathered together and went to Citragupta with folded hands.

The men said:

2. "We have become weak and tired (by this work in which we are now engaged). So please entrust this work to others. We shall do some other work, however difficult it may be.

3. Save us, O Lord. Please see how much wearied we are. Others will do this work to your satisfaction."

4. Enraged at these words, Citragupta heaved a sigh like a serpent and looked all around with eyes red with anger.

5. His eyes fell on an uncouth figure standing not far from him and immediately that person came near him.

6. The angry Citragupta sent him on an errand. He was the Rākṣasa named Mandeha[1] and he departed immediately.

7. He went to the giant Rākṣasas who were in various forms, wearing many ornaments and standing ready to bring about any kind of destruction.

8. They were the persons meant to be brought there by Citragupta who looks at all beings alike.

9. Then those cannibalic Rākṣasas having numerous forms mounted elephants and horses,

10. Donned armour and gloves, took their weapons and led by their servants, bowed at his feet.

11. Awaiting his order in great joy, they said, "O Lord, tell us what we should do. We are here to carry out your orders. Whose life should we cut?"

12. Hearing their words, Citragupta said choked with anger, heaving again and again.

13. "O you warriors, Mandehas, who always do what I wish, bind these (my men) and bring them here.

14. You are all highly valiant and you are the annihilators of all beings. Bring these that disobey me, wounded or bound."

1. The chief of the group of demons called Mandehas.

15. Hearing these words, they said:

The Rākṣasas said:

16. "Wearied, hungry or sorrowful sages, should be considered as ministers, so too the thousands of servants.

17. They are ordered to be killed by your great self. It is not proper that they should become the source of our destruction.

18. Just as they have arisen thinking of *dharma*, so too are we. You are also for the same purpose.

19. Let there be no false resolve for one remaining in *dharma*. If you are pleased, give up this idea of our fight.

20. Protect us from those mighty servants who will be struck by us Rākṣasas in the battle-field."

21. Then fierce diseases with forms at their will soon came ready there.

22. Some came on elephants, some on horses, some in chariots, some on swans and some on lions.

23. Others came on deer, jackals, buffaloes, tigers, asses and goats, also on vultures, eagles, peacocks, cocks and serpents.

24. In vehicles in this manner, armed with numerous weapons and mutually challenging, they all appeared there.

25. The warriors on either side, in their eagerness to gain victory, brandished their weapons and raised shouts which seemed to make the earth shudder.

26-27. Then started the battle, and in its darkness shone the crowns, bangles and ear-rings all over the place.

28-29. The battle became exciting and frightful with clashing tridents, spears, swords, clubs and other weapons.

30. Hand to hand fight was followed by each dragging the other by the hair and thus swelled the battle.

31. The Rākṣasas were vanquished by the valiant men of Yama and Loud utterances like 'give, give', 'strike', 'hold', 'stand' etc. could be heard.

32. Those who were fleeing were caught hold of and challenged by their opposites with eyes red with rage.

33. "Wait, Wait, where do you go ?" "I am not going, be assured." "I have released this weapon to destroy your body".

34. "O fool, you have not released any weapon to injure me." "I have aimed these arrows. Receive them. Why do you run ?"

35. "What do you say, O wicked man ? I am an adept in battle. Tell me whether you can live facing this weapon which I release."

36. The Mandeha Rākṣasas soon came to be caught in their thousands.

37. Then they resorted to magical means as they could assume any form at will.

38. Their army became covered with darkness and they could be visible as well as invisible. Then Yama's men resorted to Jvara, the fierce fever, for help.

39. He was uneven-eyed, held the trident in his hand and was the destroyer of all beings.

40. "Ordered by Citragupta, the Rākṣasas called Mandehas are killing and eating us. They are in the form of a thousand ailments and we are as ourselves. O Lord of the worlds, protect us."

41. Hearing these words of Yama's men, the black, squint-eyed Jvara holding the iron rod in his hand, became angry.

42. He then called a large number of his mighty soldiers who were shining like fire. They stood before him with folded hands. He commanded them:

43. "Burn these Rākṣasas by your physical strength as well as yogic power".

44. At this command of Jvara, they rushed to the place of these Rākṣasas shouting like thunder.

45. They struck with their numerous weapons the haughty Rākṣasas in large number.

46. They became seriously wounded and drenched in blood.

47. Yama himself then interceded, stopped the battle and saved the Rākṣasas who were being thus killed.

48. He then went to Jvara in all humility, honoured him holding his hand and pacified him.

49. He led him into his house and wiped off the sweat on his face.

50. After he had calmed down, Yama said, "O lord, you are full of penance and you pervade everywhere. But what have you done ?

51. You are worshipped by the whole world. O lord, you and I control this whole world as we should, as we have seen and heard.

52-53. I am to be received by you when my end comes, although I am the annihilator of all beings. So be pleased to go to your abode and to put an end to this battle.

54. The six crores of Rākṣasas will be revived and they will become decayless but will not go to you."

55. Thus bringing the war to a close, Yama restored friendship between Citragupta and his men.

56. They then requested Citragupta to allot them their duties as before regarding the good and the bad the mortals acquire.

57. Then they went to Rudra by the side of Citragupta and bowing to him, said:

58-59. "As the worlds, as the king and as Death, O lord, rise-up. Forgive us, forgive us."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND TWO

Punishment according to deeds

The sage (Naciketas) said:

1. I was wonderstruck at the instructions given by the wise Yama to Citragupta.

2. Those who have swerved from the righteous path have to take the consequences. Some are scorched in fire and some severely bound. They are tortured as the result of their own deeds.

3-4. (Yama says): "Take him away soon, this sinner who has done bad deeds, who is ungrateful and who is of wicked mind. Let him be devoured by pouncing dogs.

5. Take him who has the sin of killing the father, mother or cow, to the deceptive Śālmalī tree and let the sharp thorns in it pierce him.

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1. This shows that the Jvara was the manifestation of Rudra.

6. Fry him in oil or in decomposed ghee and then from the hot vessel throw him in a hot copper plate.

7. Then throw him in burning fire. He will be then born as a man and will face the torments of debts.

8. Throw the man, who has stolen a bed or seat or set fire, quickly into Vaitaraṇī.

9. For the man who defiled holy places for bath is this pike fresh from fire.

10. Pierce the ears of him who has given false evidence or uttered falsehood otherwise.

11. Bind the Brahmin who has performed sacrifice for the village, who has been unsteady in mind or boastful or obstinate, and give him nothing.

12. Cut off the tongue of the man who has offended any one by his words.

13. Cut off the generative organ of the man who has committed adultery whether without knowing it or deliberately out of lust, and then apply lime and also heat.

14. Yoke him to the mortar who has ruined his coparceners out of selfishness.

15. Thrash this usurer all over his body for the great sin he has committed.

16. The stealer of gold and the ungrateful man should be equated with the person who has killed a Brahmin.

17. Cut his bones and apply lime and fire. Let five ferocious tigers tear him with their sharp teeth.

18. Put him in boiling slime who has failed to maintain fire or given it up altogether.

19. Give him to the fierce scorpions for he has incurred the sin of killing a hero.

20. Throw him who performed sacrifices for all into the deep pond. Let him carry water to all kinds of beasts.

21. Let there be none to help him or give him anything.

22. Let those who performed vows without gifts, those who sold Veda and those that did all kinds of ritual not be given anything.

23. Let him who took away the water-vessel and prohibited any one from food, be beaten with strong rods.

24. He should be beaten with bamboo sticks, whips and iron rods. He should not be given food or water.

25. Burn him in fire who failed to keep the confidence reposed in him.

26. Put him in fire for thousands of years who has committed theft of a Brahmin's wealth.

27. Afterwards send him to be born as an animal. Let his minute body then enter different kinds of worms and birds.

28. After thousands of such lives, let him be born as a man again and again in various families, but always as a wicked person.

29. The man who has killed a Brahmin should be oppressed to the maximum; so too the murderer of the king, the stealer of gold and the drinker of alcohol.

30. Then he should be afflicted with consumption.

31. Let this man who has killed a cow be made to climb up the deceptive Śālmalī tree. Let him be dragged by the Rākṣasas.

32. Let him be then put in the hell Pūtīpāka and bitten by beasts. To a period one-fourth of that for Brahminicide, he should remain born as a beast.

33. He should be condemned wherever he goes and he is to be born again and again doing sinful things.

34. This man is wicked. He has incurred the sin of killing his father. Let him be bitten by the beasts for a hundred years.

35. Let him then be put in different hells. Let him become a human being again, but die even while in womb.

36. Let him be thus in ten wombs and then released to be born as a man but full of misery. Let him suffer due to hunger and diseases.

37-38. Let him who has betrayed his friend be quickly crushed in machine and put in fire for two hundred years.

39. Let him be born as a dog and afterwards as a man full of misery, discarded by all and suffering ailments.

40. This man has stolen salt and also what belonged to the Brahmin.

41. Let him be put here for five hundred years. Then he will be born as a worm in faeces. He will then take birth as a bird and afterwards as a pig.

42. Let this man who used to set fire (to useful things) be put in this fire of burning wood.

43. When the effect of his actions is over, he will be born as an animal and then as a man full of misery.

44-45. Those who jointly persuade one for bad deeds and those that steal the wealth of others, are to be put in the hell Raurava.

46. And he who does bad instigated thus is to be tortured in Kumbhīpāka. He is to be born as an ass and later as a pig eating filth.

47. He who commits theft of wealth should undergo severe suffering. He will be born as an ass ten times.

48. Then taking birth as a human being, he will be a thief and incur all sorts of sins harassing others. Then he will be born as a being hanging head downwards from a tree.

49. Let the greedy miser be burnt in fire.

50. He is to be released only after a hundred years.

51. He will be born as a pig and then as an ichneumon and finally as a human being again.

52. The man who gives false evidence and is wedded to falsehood, never gets peace anywhere, being condemned by his own actions.

53. Let this liar who has appropriated for himself the field of another, suffer here as long as the result of his actions persists in him.

54. Let him suffer for his actions one after another. That will be, no doubt, for a lakh of years.

55. Let him then be born as various animals and later as a man without anything to appease his hunger.

56. He will be full of sins and his desires will never be fulfilled. He will be born blind or deaf.

57. He will be born sometimes dumb, sometimes blind and sometimes full of diseases. He will, thus, have only suffering and never happiness.

58. He who misappropriates the field, even after a thousand lives as various beings, never attains peace.

59. Let him who takes for himself another's land, although distressed by his own mental anguish, be bound well and burnt in fire.

60. After a long period in that manner in my world, let him be born as a cat.

61. Let his hunger be never appeased and let him continue to be kept bound. Let him be born as fifty kinds of animals.

62. Let this man who is guilty of killing birds, be bitten by dogs and vultures.

63. Let him then become a cock eating filth and afterwards as a fly and mosquito. After a thousand of such lives, let him become a man again.

64. Let this sinner who has killed pigs be hit by buffaloes.

65. Let him be thus hit and smashed by the hoofs and horns for a thousand years.

66. Released from there, let him become a pig, then a buffalo and later a cock, a hare and a jackal.

67. In all these lives he will be a prey. There is no other way to mitigate his actions.

68. Then he will become a man, but as a hunter. There is no other way even after a hundred lives.

69. Put in glowing cinders for three hundred years this man who has given to others food left after his eating.

70. Let this bad adulterous woman, who was unfaithful to her husband, embrace these seven men of iron.

71. She will then become a dog, afterwards a pig and, when the result of her actions is over, a distressed woman. She will never attain happiness.

72. This man made his servants toil very much and then sent them away without giving them any food or drink.

73. He was only fond of his own glorification.

74. Let him, therefore, be put in the terrific hell Raurava.

75. Beat the man who performs all sorts of actions for thousands of years.

76. Let him then be born as a robber and afterwards as a serpent.

77. Let him then be a pig, and then a goat, then an elephant, a horse, a jackal and crane.

78. After a very long time, let him become a man.

79. He is to be born dead in five lives and die as a boy in five others.

80. Only afterwards does he become a man.

81. Whatever good or bad a being has done, the result of that necessarily accrues to it.

82. So it is that the great Lord has laid down the results of all actions."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND THREE

Sins and punishment for them

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. Citragupta (himself) spoke about other miscellaneous sins (and their punishments). Listen to them.

2. Those who do not have good conduct and self-control and have great sins in them, and who die (as a consequence) in the dark half of the month, face punishment.

3. Those who incur the displeasure of the king or the teacher are all condemned. They care only for their sustenance and they are not dependable or affable.

4. Those who delight in injuring others, who are cruel, deceitful, obstruct others in their work, kill the gayal, buffalo and goat,

5. Those that set fire to the forest and those that trade on pigs are tormented in hell for a long time.

6. When this period is over, they are born again, but will be short-lived and disease-stricken.

7. Sometimes they are dead even when in womb, sometimes in boyhood or a little later.

8. They may die by accident like the fall of a log of wood or by weapon or may be blown away by a stormy wind or burnt by fire. They may meet with death also by drowning or being caught in a net or by a fall or by poison.

9. Those who have the sin of killing mother, father, friend or relation, repeatedly face punishment as long as life-breath remains in them.

10. Dishonest traders in metals and jewels, those who bring about abortions, magicians, dealers in poison, those who indulge in arson,

11. Makers of cages, hitters with the trident, tale-bearers, those who pick up quarrels, or make baseless allegations against others,

12. Dealers in the flesh and hides of cattle, elephants, asses and camels and those that unnecessarily provoke others are all harassed in hells.

13. After these terrible torments, they take birth as human beings again,

14. But with mutilated limbs and immersed in misery.

15. Because of their actions, they meet with injuries in the ear, nose, hands and feet.

16. They get physical ailments as well as mental. They suffer pain in the neck, severe headache and serious stomach disorders.

17. They become stupid, blind, deaf, dumb and lame, often creeping with their legs.

18. They may become paralytic, dwarfish, limping, pot-bellied and disfigured.

19. Their bad actions bring upon them leprosy of various kinds, hernia, hydrocele and diabetes,

20. Ophthalmic disorders, venereal diseases, asthma, heart-trouble and diseases of stomach and spleen.

21. They become, thus, afflicted by numerous diseases. These people who have committed cruelty are asked to be severely beaten.

22. Messengers who deliver the false message are ordered to be duly dealt with.

23. Those who are harsh towards women, whose talk is of four kinds, namely, false, offensive, ironical and treacherous,

24. Or provocative, stinging, contemptible, unfriendly, harsh, inconsistent,

25. Or trifling like the pith of the plantain, or wounding,

26. Grating, meaningless, ceaselessly chattering, incoherent,

27. Who speak false and defamatory words obstinately, shameless even when condemned and still utter words stinging to the quick,

28. Who do not tolerate the virtues of others being extolled, all such base persons are ordered to be well bound and punished.

29. They are then born several times as beasts, worms and birds.

30. People who have done harm to others or caused harm by others are also punished for their sins for a long time.

31. When the effects of their deeds are over, they again become born as men but without proper knowledge or ability and are insulted by their own kith and kin.

32. They will be given up even by their friends and relations as they have done harm to the world and are disliked by the world.

33. Even the sins of others fall on their heads in the form of lightning, weapon, poison or physical clash with another. Such is the punishment for blabberers.

34. Those who are corrupt with regard to matters of theft, violence and justice,

35. Who steal or rob, who live upon taxes and pretending to be rulers,

36. Who harass the poor in the villages, who cheat people of gold, gems or pearls,

37. Who do not honour agreements, who oppress people, who are clever in accomplishing selfish aims,

38. Who engage themselves in unnecessary litigation, who destroy minerals to make silver,

39. Who appropriate for themselves what is deposited with them, or perform sorcery, all these are tortured in various hells.

40. These sinners are ordered to be put in these hells for a long time.

41. At the expiry of the result of their actions, they are born as human beings again,

42. But in places which always instil great fear, fear from thieves, kings, dangers, diseases and hunger,

43. Where there will be natural calamities and the people ever greedy.

44. They will be full of sorrow even while in womb and, when born, they may be deformed, single-handed or potbellied,

45. With veins protruding all over the body and rheumatic. Their wives will always shed tears and never associate with them.

46. Their children will never be well-formed. They will be dwarfish and deformed and with unsteady eyes.

47. In their miserable life they may raise horrible cries, but in vain. They will get only food that is left by others.

48. Being inferior in appearance, strength and conduct, they may become royal servants of the lowest category.

49. But they will be homeless, full of misery.

50. They are cared not even for a straw even by friends and relations in the same caste. They incur royal punishment every day.

51. They are simply disappointed even when big ceremonies are performed.

52. If they turn to farming, cattle rearing or trade, whatever they do results in failure, and they fail to know why it is so.

53. Whatever bad befalls that place, these sufferers will be the most affected.

54. Their fields will not get rainfall, even when there is heavy rain everywhere else; on the contrary they may be damaged by lightning fall.

55. These people never get happiness, but always great misery. Only a series of sorrows comes upon these who have the sin of stealing.

56. Now listen to the torments for people who set their minds on the wives of others.

57. They will be born as animals and will be of unsteady mind.

58. Those who do adultery will be caught firm and suitably dealt with.

59-60. Know now what happens to those who outrage the modesty of noble women, either by force or otherwise, by sorcery or in a political turmoil, as also to those who defile rules of Classes and bring about contamination of castes, or molest virtuous persons.

61. They are put in the terrible hell for thousands of years.

62. Then they are born as human beings but low in families of contaminated castes.

63. Those who resort to prostitutes, sorcerers or dealers in liquor and have sexual alliance with bad and outcaste women, although shamelessly wearing the caste-mark and pretending gentlemanliness,

64. Those who kidnap women and ruin them, those who sport with them, put on their dress,

65. Those who live upon women, depend on their earnings, worshipping their deities, following their rules, wearing their garments and speaking like them,

66. Adopting their ways and always speaking about them.

67. Becoming addicted to pleasures and having a repulsive look,

68. Get physical and mental distress in abundance.

69. They are bathed in boiling oil and are fed upon by worms. They are burnt in fire, soaked in lime and thrown in the river.

70. This is what happens to those who have their minds on the wives of others. I have thus told you all this.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND FOUR

Instructions to Messengers

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. O great Brahmins, I also heard these instructions given by Citragupta to his men.

2. "Do you say that this one is far away, and his actions have not come to a close ? Why do you take pity on him ? Bring him here. Don't be sorry.

3. Why do you remain indifferent with a shy face ? Why don't you hasten ? What have you been doing all this time ?

4. Go, go, bring him here soon. That you are weak should not make you insolent.

5. Do you say that his marriage is going on, or that he is an ascetic ?

6. Do you say that we should wait for some time, or that he is remaining with his wife ?

7. Do you say that she is a chaste and good woman ? Do you say that he is a boy and has returned home only last night ?

8. Do you say that the man is sitting for his food, or is lying in water, or is giving a gift ?

9. O you are all virtuous and I alone am cruel ! Go, go, do your duty without any loss of time.

10. You soon become a snake, you become a tiger, you a python, you a crocodile and you a poisonous worm.

11. You become a disease and hold him who is to go to hell. You become diarrhoea and you vomitting.

12. You become ear-ache, you cholera, you high fever.

13. You become rheumatism, you dropsy, you epilepsy, you insanity,

14. You become vertigo and you paralysis and do your work.

15. You remain like this as long as necessary. At the end

of the period or when good befalls otherwise, you will be relieved from this.

16. So go away quickly. Don't tarry.

17. What I have told you is the order of Yama. May be that you have to spend only one day like this, may be it is two.

18. May be it is three, four, six, ten or a fortnight, a month, even many months.

19. After due time, you will get relief. It is true that this is difficult.

20. But as long as I have to discharge my duty, you too have to discharge yours.

21. I have instructed you according to my direction. You have to obey my orders irrespective of whether the person concerned is alert or deluded.

22. I shall give you protection from Brahmins. So don't hesitate to do your duty, let it be a sage, a woman or a mighty man.

23. Don't be afraid of any trouble. It is my command.

24. Do as I have asked you without any delay."

25. The great Citragupta ordered them thus.

26. His command was like that of Rudra, Indra and Brahmā.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND FIVE

Good and bad results

The sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. O great Brahmins, I shall now tell you what Yama and Citragupta spoke. Listen.

2. "Let this man return to worldly life, let this one go to the heaven of kings. Let this one become a tree, this one an animal and let this one get final release.

3. Let this one become a serpent and let this one attain supreme beatitude.

4. Let this man see his ancestors who are suffering, crying

and asking for help again and again, but condemned to eternal hell because of their own sins.

5. Let this man who was unrighteous, gave up his wife and is without sons and grandsons, be put in the Raurava hell and smashed by mighty hands.

6. Release these who have been brought here and those who are being brought, because they are all sinless.

7. In prosperity as well as in adversity these people have upheld *dharma*.

8. Let them remain happy in heaven for many *kalpas* and, after enjoying there very beautiful women, be born again as men in Kali age.

9. Let this man have permanent residence in heaven as he died fighting an enemy in battle.

10. Any one who has staked his life for the sake of a Brahmin, a cow or for the nation, should be immediately taken to Amarāvatī, the city of Indra. He will remain there for one *kalpa* riding in the aerial car.

11. This man was a highly righteous person always steeped in *dharma*, giving numerous gifts and compassionate to all.

12. Honour him quickly with sandalpaste and garlands.

13. Let him be thus honoured and fanned with chowries and then given a chariot,

14. So that he can leave this place of the dead and go to heaven where he will have a place even above Indra.

15. He will be received there with the sound of conchs and words of welcome.

16. Let this one also go to Indra's world, since the whole world is full of his fame.

17. Indra awaits him there for his hundreds of virtues. He will remain in heaven like Indra himself.

18. He enjoys the pleasures of heaven till the expiry of his *dharma* and then he takes birth as a man and enjoys all pleasures.

19. Take this virtuous man, who is full of dharma and who has made gifts of even gems, to the world of Aśvinīdevas full of pleasure.

20. Let this great man go to the great lord Rudra, as he has given numerous milch cows to Brahmins,

21. And given to them good food in abundance.

22. He remains there for one *kalpa* injoying the beautiful Rudra women.

23. By this person were given to Brahmins honey with sugar-candy and tasty food with good flavour,

24. And good milch cows together with calves, gold and golden garments.

25. I have seen three crore entries for him in heaven. And after his life in heaven, he will be born in a family of sages.

26. Let him who has made gifts of gold be reported to Devas, and after their approval, betaken to Lord Rudra.

27. Let him in all effulgence enjoy there as he likes.

28. Let him who propitiates his ancestors be with them and let those who are liberal givers go to heaven.

29. This man was compassionate to all and fulfilling the desires of all and he should be honoured here by granting him whatever he desires.

30. Let this man who has made gifts of land to Brahmins go to heaven. Let him remain with his followers in the world of Brahmā.

31. Let him with all his desires fulfilled, get the unaging and eternal place, honoured by sages."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND SIX

The Result of good actions

The Ṛṣī (Naciketas) said:

1. O great ascetic Brahmins, I shall tell you about the instructions given by Citragupta, as I heard them. Please listen.

2. "This is a highly compassionate and forbearing man who takes all as his guests and gives all of them alike good food and eats only what is left after that.

3. Leave him, leave him. That is the dictate of Dharma.

4. I stand here with Kāla and Mṛtyu and I am flanked by the disfigured sinners.

5. But this man is sung in the sky by Gandharvas and Apsa-

rases. So give him a divine seat and a vehicle and whatever else he may wish.

6. And all this should be given without any delay. Such is the command of Yama because he has given numerous gifts without any ostentation.

7. See to it that this person is fed well with his followers because he is a hero.

8. Let him remain here till the aerial cars arrive from heaven. He may then board them with his retinue and go to the abode of gods and receive their honour.

9. Let him remain happy there as long as the worlds last.

10. One who goes there like this is really gratified and remains there in all purity.

11. Honour him with carrying out all that he wishes, who has given several girls in marriage or performed several sacrifices and let him attain the abode of Viṣṇu.

12. Let him remain there for a hundred thousand years and then be born in a high family in the human world.

13. Honour this man who is full of compassion for all. Let him remain like a god for a million years. He will then be born as a highly honoured man in the world.

14. Honour him well who has made gifts of sandals, umbrellas and vessels for water several times.

15. Let him extend his soft and cool hand in assemblies where thousands gather,

16. And be an ever happy Vidyādhara attended on by four Mahāpadmas.[1]

17. At the end of this period, let him be born in the world in a family full of beautiful women.

18. Let him who has given milk, curd and ghee to Brahmins be honoured when he comes here.

19-20. Get for him without fail vessels in thousands of milk and its products so that he may enjoy them together with his relatives.

21-22. Let him then go to the enviable Goloka and enjoy there for hundreds of years as a god attended on by several beautiful women."

1. These are embodiments of treasures.

23-24. Citragupta said this also, "(The cows) move about in the world bearing ambrosia (in the form of milk). They combine in them all gods and goddesses and also the Vedas. They are the best of all tīrthas.

25. They are the holiest of holy and the most nourishing among nourishments. Therefore the gift of cows should be made for getting purity.

26. By offering once curds, all the gods are pleased; by milk, Śiva is pleased; by ghee, Agni is pleased; by milk-pudding Brahmā is pleased.

27. By offering this for thirteen years and by taking them oneself, satisfaction and purity are obtained.

28. By drinking Pañcagavya, the result of performing the Vājimedha sacrifice is obtained. The products got from cow are the most pure. There is none else like them.

29. In the teeth of the cow remain gods Maruts, in its tongue Sarasvatī. In the middle of the hoofs are Gandharvas and in their ends serpents.

30. In its joints Sādhyas, in the eyes the sun and the moon, in the back all Kṣatriyas and in the tail *dharma*.

31. In its excretory organ are the tīrthas and in the urine the river Gaṅgā. In the feet the four oceans.

32. In the roots of hair the sages and in the dung Lakṣmī. In the hair remains all knowledge and in the skin the two Ayanas (northern and southern).

33-34. Because of the cow, one is endowed with courage, determination, tranquility, prosperity, progress, memory, intelligence, humility, health, fame, knowledge and progeny.

35. Where there are cows, there is the universe with the god of gods foremost. Where there are cows, there is Lakṣmī and eternal *dharma*."

36. I saw the cows honoured everywhere, in the houses and in the broad streets.

37. Men and women with great restraint were found in thousands sitting, eating and sleeping.

38. They were also engaged in sports and other entertainments in thousands. Many were found decorated with flowers and garlands in drinking houses.

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1. These are milk, curd and ghee and cow's urine and cowdung.

39. There was abundant food of great variety and beds, seats and drinks, and also horses and elephants.

40. I saw there beautiful women of various kinds, some of them engaged in sports in water, some playing in the gardens and others in their happy homes.

41. There is none like this and none other than this.

42. What a fine structure and what a fine decoration in house after house there.

43. Seeing all this wonderful place well, I came to Yama again.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND SEVEN

Good results

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. O great sages, there is another thing which I heard from Nārada in the assembly of Yama.

2. As he was asking him about the doings of the great, he narrated a story as told by Citrabhānu.

3. That was about King Janaka attaining all his great desires.[1] I shall tell you that. Please listen.

4. The resplendent sage Nārada arrived at the assembly of Yama.

5. Seeing him arrive there at his own accord, king Yama quickly received him with due honour, circumambulated him and said:

6. "O great Brahmin Nārada, welcome to you. By my good luck have you come here.

7. You know everything, see everything and you are the foremost among those knowing *dharma*. O sage, You know well the legends about the Gandharvas.

8. We have become extremely purified at your sight. The whole of this place has also become sanctified.

9. Please tell me without any hesitation whatever you have

1. This story, however, is not found narrated.

in mind, whether anything is to be done by me or got done by any one else.

10. There is nothing in this world which cannot be got by great ascetics and Brahmins like you."

11. Hearing these words of Yama, Nārada, the knower of *dharma*, began to speak.

Nārada said:

12. I shall tell you since you have asked. You are always the protector, keeper and the leader of *dharma*, doubtless by your truth, penance, forbearance and courage.

13. There is none like you who can read the minds of others and know what is done. I have a great doubt and that has to be cleared by you.

14. How is immortality obtained by practising vows, following rules, making gifts or performing penance ?

15. How is high prosperity attained in the world and how great fame, and how the eternal abode free from all troubles ?

16. What leads one to the despicable hell ?

Tell me all this",

Yama said:

17. O sage, people who do unrighteous deeds undergo numerous torments in hell.

18. I shall tell you all that in detail. Please listen and then think about it.

19. Those who maintain (the sacrificial) fire, who have sons, who make gifts of land, who are valiant, who live for a hundred years, who are well-versed in Vedas never go to hell.

20. Chaste women, truthful men, those who never face defeat, are not obstinate, ever faithful to the master never go to hell.

21. Those who abstain from injury, follow the rules of celibacy, observe chastity, make gifts and are devoted to Brahmins, also do not go to hell.

22-23. Those people of composure who look after their own wives and avoid the wives of others, are fully compassionate to all, never go to this infernum full of darkness and wailings, the place for torture.

24. Men of great knowledge, who are indifferent (to you and sorrow alike), those that stake their lives for the sake of the

master, those that are liberal givers and kind to all beings, also do not go there.

25. Those who look after the comforts of their parents also do not go there.

26. These who make gifts of sesamum, cows, gold and land to Brahmins do not go there.

27. Those who perform sacrifices, observe Cāturmāsya and maintain the sacrificial fire,

28. Who carry out the wishes of preceptors, who are calm and collected, who recite the Vedas every day and who are always cultured, never see me, having realised the self themselves.

29. Those who have full control of the senses and who avoid sexual acts in prohibited times, also never go to hell.

30. Those Brahmins who have given up all desires and have control of senses become gods.

31. They do not go to this terrific hell which is for sinners.

Nārada said:

32. Is it the gift that is conducive to well-being or the worthiness of the person to whom it is given ? By what kind of action is the honour of the heaven attained ?

33. By what kind of gift do we get good physique, wealth, grain, longevity and good family. Please tell me.

34. It is impossible to detail even in the course of a hundred years what befalls the good and what the bad.

35. I shall tell you, therefore, briefly about it. The well-being is mainly the result of virtues.

36. Listen to this secret, O sage, as to who obtains what after death.

37. It is by penance that heaven is attained, by penance fame, and by penance again longevity and prosperity.

38. Learning, knowledge, health, beauty, wealth and happiness are all acquired by penance and not by the mere desire for them.

39. O sage, in this way, by silent order everything is got due to merit, enjoyments by gifts and the very life by celibacy.

40. By non-violence is got handsome form and by vows birth in good family. By austerities like eating only roots and fruits a kingdom is obtained and by feeding on leaves heaven.

41. By feeding on milk one attains heaven and by attending on the preceptor acquires abundant wealth. Progeny is got by performing Śrāddha.

42. By gifts of cow in proper time and with the necessary ritual, by austerities like sleeping on grass and by drinking water in Triṣvana ceremony, one attains the world one desires.

43. The performer of sacrifice goes to heaven, particularly if he lives on water alone for ten years.

44. One attains splendour by giving up tasty food and gets long-lived children by giving up meat.

45. By giving up sandal and garlands, the body becomes well-formed. By gifts of food, one attains intelligence and power of memory.

46. By the gift of umbrella is obtained a good house, by the gift of a pair offootwear a vehicle, by the gift of cloths handsome body, wealth and children.

47. By giving drinks, eternal satisfaction is gained, by food and drinks, all desires are accomplished.

48. He who offers to a Brahmin a tree full of fragrant flowers and fruits, gets a house full of women and gems.

49. By gifts of food, drink and dress, one attains the same. By gifts of garlands, incense, sandal, flowers and fine house-hold items to a Brahmin, one gets a handsome body and becomes free from diseases.

50. By gift of a house beautiful with beds and full of grains to a Brahmin, is acquired a lofty residence full of women, horses and elephants.

51. By gifts of incense and cows, one attains the world of Vasus.

52. Eternal bliss in heaven is attained by gifts of elephants, cows and bulls. Lustre is obtained by the gift of ghee and gracefulness by the gift of oil.

53. By the gift of honey, satisfaction in all tastes is obtained, and by the gift of lamp, effulgence is acquired.

54. By milk-pudding is acquired the nourishment of the body, by the mixture of sesamum and sugar suppleness, by fruits children and by flowers all happiness.

55. By vehicles one gets palanquin and aerial car and also prosperity.

56. By giving shelter, one attains all that is desired.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHT

The story of chaste woman

The Sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1-2. In a short while there could be seen many Brahmins with high spiritual attainments proceeding to heaven in aerial cars resplendent like the sun, accompanied by their wives and relations.

3. At this sight, Yama became pale in face and reduced in lustre. He soon became angry and sorrowful.

4. Seeing him lose his lustre and knowing his mind, Nārada asked him.

5. "You were beaming all along as if you were another lord of beasts (Śiva). How is it that your happy face has become so very pale all of a sudden?

6. O king, what is your anguish that you heave like a serpent? I wish to know what causes you fear."

Yama said:

7. "True that my face gets discoloured and mouth parched. I shall tell you why. Please listen.

8. Eminent Brahmins who depend on alms received, who are steadfast in learning Vedas and performing penance, who are humble and free from jealousy,

9. Who have control of senses, honour guests and contemplate on the supreme and know self, by-pass me.

10. They never come near me and I have no control over them. They pass over my head together with their wives and followers.

11. They have fine sandal smeared all over the body and are dressed well and adorned with garlands and they offer garlands to me. I am, therefore, distressed.

12. (They make fun of me saying) 'O Death, whom are you awaiting here,' 'How can death occur?' 'Why don't you speak. O Death', 'Have you become unwanted in the world?'

13. I strike at sinners who give up *dharma* and are greedy. But with regard to these who have earned the merit of penance, I am nobody.

14. For these great souls, I have no powers of benediction or

destruction nor of injunction or prohibition. I am, therefore, distressed, O Sage."

15. Just then there arrived a chaste woman with her husband and followers in an aerial car ushered in with the sound of musical instruments.

16-17. Seated in that car, she spoke to Yama in pleasant words.

The chaste woman said:

18. "O great lord of *dharma* honoured by all, don't have any ill-will towards these Brahmins who are full of penance.

19. The greatness and power of their penance, none can estimate. The Brahmins are steeped in Vedic lore.

20. They are always to be honoured by all. They have all gods in themselves. Jealousy or anger should not be shown to them.

21. Without considering what they do is good or bad, you should respect them. Impelled by desire or delusion, the virtuous should never be made the object of rage."

22-23. Seeing that chaste woman pass in the sky like a lightning, after being honoured by Yama, Nārada asked him.

Nārada said:

24. Who is this beautiful and virtuous woman who spoke to you for your good and departed receiving your honour.

25. I am very much eager to know this. So tell me in brief.

Yama said:

26. I shall tell you in full the auspicious story about this lady whom I honoured here.

27. In Kṛtayuga there was a very famous, effulgent and truthful king named Nimi.

28. He had a son named Mithi who had a wife named Rūpavatī very much devoted to him.

29. She always followed her husband's words, was pleased with him and performed auspicious deeds.

30. He was very virtuous, compassionate to all, highly truthful and full of penance.

31. When he was ruling the earth with all *dharma*, there was no disease, decay or death.

32. There was always rain in the country. His kingdom became endowed with all that is good.

33. Not a single man was there who was suffering from disease or distress.

34. After a long time, the queen spoke in all humility to this king of Mithilā.

The queen said:

35. Whatever money that was with you in this house, with our servants and followers and with the Brahmins in this earth, has been now fully spent.

36. O king, you are not aware that there is not necessary food.

37. We have no kine, dress or even flowers and roots.

38. I do not find now even the necessary vessels.

39. Please tell me what I should do. I am ever prepared to obey you.

The King said:

40. I am unable to tell you anything unpleasant. At the same time, I do not find anything to please you or the people.

41. Therefore, if you are pleased, I shall tell you what we may do in our present condition.

42. A hundred years have passed in our sacrificial austerities. We will now build a temple with the wood of Kuddāla and perform rituals there. You will then get the food and drink we need.

43. Told thus, the queen replied to the king.

The queen said:

44. O king, here we have thousands of servants, horses, elephants, camels, bulls, buffaloes and asses.

45. How will they fail to carry out your wish ?

The king said:

46. "Our servants do whatever duty we allot to them. I have engaged them in annual as well as other functions.

47. The bulls, asses, horses, elephants and camels are assigned to the discharge of various other duties.

48. All the iron, tin, copper, silver and gold have been given for various purposes.

49. O queen, I do not find now any iron or gold for the temple to be made with Kuddāla.'

50. Told thus by the king, the queen spoke to him joyfully.

51. "O king, proceed as you like, I shall certainly follow you.' Thus agreed, the king started with queen.

52. Then the king and queen set out searching for a suitable place and traversed a long distance. Then the king said:

53. "This I find to be a good place. Let us remain here. I shall cut off bushes and thorns and you may clear them from here.

54. This will be your service and we will accomplish our aim".

55. Said thus by the king, the queen spoke to him sweetly with a smile.

56. "The tree we want stands close by and a golden bush too. But nowhere near do I find water.

57. How will we be able to build a temple here? It will result only in disease of the heart.

58. Here is the tree in this fertile land. But how can our action be useful here?'

59. Hearing this, the king spoke in endearing words:

60. "Let us begin with the preliminaries. We may be able to get water near or a little away. There is no obstacle of any kind here."

61. Then he began to clear the place together with his wife.

62. It was the summer season and the sun was blazing high up in the sky.

63. The heat was severe and the gentle queen became hungry and thirsty.

64. Her tender rosy feet turned red with heat.

65. The rays of the sun were like fire at noon. Then the tormented queen told her husband:

66. "Oppressed by this sweltering heat, I am extremely thirsty. Be pleased to give me some water quickly".

67. So saying she fell down being very much fatigued but as she was falling down, she looked at the sun.

68. As her look was in anger, the sun in the sky became fear-stricken and fell down on the earth.

69. Seeing this strange thing, the king asked:

70. "O great luminary, why have you come here leaving your orb ? Tell me what I can do for you. You are worshipped by the entire world".

71. To the king who was asking thus, the Sun said apologetically: "This chaste lady got very much angry with me. As a result I fell down. I am now here to do you whatever service you require.

72. There is none equal to her in all the three worlds. Certainly there is none like her in this world.

73. What a prowess is hers, what a penance and what a courage ?

74. She is a nice match for you, very obedient and pure with penance.

75. She is chaste and good and always looks after your comforts.

76. She is as suitable to you as Śacī is to Indra. The good has joined the good due to merit as can be seen from the perfect harmony.

77. Your desire will never go in vain. Put up here the temple as you wish.

78. There is none else who deserves the fruit of all this.

79-80. So saying the Sun gave the king a Vessel of water, a pair of sandals and a well-decorated umbrella, being very much pleased with him.

81. He gave all this for his pleasure and use for meritorious purposes.

82. The (Sun) gave this for the sake of the king's beloved.

83. The queen was sprinkled with the water. She regained consciousness and asked the king wondering what had happened.

84. "O king, who gave you this pleasant water and these fine sandals and umbrella ?"

The king said:

85. "O queen, this god Sun came down here from the sky out of compassion for you."

86. Thus told by the king, she said to him: "What can I do for him ? Please ascertain his desire."

87. Then the king fell at his feet with folded hands and said, "O god, please tell us what we may do for you ?"

88. Thus requested by the king, the Sun said, "O king, let me have protection from women."

89. Hearing these words of the Sun, the king communicated them to his wife.

90. Knowing thus from the king, the queen said with great pleasure:

91-92. "Since you have given this umbrella for warding off your rays, a water-pot (for keeping water) and the sandals for soothing feet, I give you protection you seek."

93. Therefore, O sage, I bow to the chaste woman and honour her.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND NINE

The greatness of the chaste women

Nārada said:

1. "O great king clad in black, please tell me by what virtuous deeds or penance do the saintly women attain the supreme path."

2. Asked thus by Nārada, the lord of *dharma* said:

Yama said :

3. It is not the observance of rules nor penance, fasting or gifts nor worship of god, but the conduct about which I shall tell you in brief.

4. She who sleeps after the husband sleeps, wakes up before he wakes up and eats after he has eaten, certainly overcomes death.

5. She who remains silent when he is silent and stands when he stands, overcomes death.

6. I am afraid of her who has the same outlook and mind

as the husband's and carries out what he says. She becomes honoured even by gods.

7-8. She who never retorts to whatever the husband says, remains calm even when chastised by him and never considers anyone other than him as god, never goes to the mouth of death.

9-10. She who always attends to the comforts of her husband and follows him closely, never enters the mouth of death.

11. She who attends on the husband considering him the mother, the father, the relation and god, overcomes me. In fact, I bow to her.

12. She who always thinks of her husband, follows the husband and shares the woes of the husband, never sees the door of death.

13. She who never turns her attention to music or dance or similar other attractions, never sees the door of death.

14. She who does not think of any one other than the husband when bathing, standing or decorating, never sees the door of death.

15. She who has her husband in mind when worshipping god or feeding the Brahmin, never sees the door of death.

16. She who wakes up before sunrise and cleans the house, never sees the door of death.

17. She who keeps well covered the eyes, body and the feelings and always observes the rules of cleanliness, never sees the door of death.

18. She who looks at the face of the husband with a view to carry out his desire and is always ready to do anything for his good, never sees the door of death.

19. Such virtuous wives of men in this world will be seen as goddesses in heaven.

20. All this was said by god Sun regarding the chaste woman.

21. Knowing all this, I honour the chaste woman.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND TEN

Means to destroy sin

Nārada said:

1. "You have now told me about the duties and greatness of chaste women as propounded by god Sun.

2. I now wish to know about something which relates to all beings.

3-4. There are people who stricken with sorrow perform penance, undertake vows with steadfast mind and without consideration of pain and pleasure. Why do they meet with impediments ?

5. It is always said that all our virtuous actions lead to welfare. Then how is it that the mind sometimes turns to sinful actions ?

6. Whose doing is this ? Who is the doer and who is that makes him do so ? Who is it that restrains this world of the four kinds of beings ?

7. Why does the mind act with anger ? How is there the horrible mixture of joy and sorrow in the world ?

8. If I can be told this secret which cannot be known even by gods, please do so."

9. Requested thus by the sage, the great lord of *dharma* spoke to him in all humility.

Yama said:

10. O Sage, I shall tell you what you wish to know. Please listen.

11. Everything is established in supreme *dharma*. I don't find really any doer or actuator of action other than that.

12. It is this that is applauded, it is this that orders, it is this that speaks, it is this that does.

13. I shall tell you what I have seen and heard about this in this celestial assembly full of great sages.

14. One gets the cumulative result of one's own actions. It is the self that brings down itself by the wrong action it does.

15. The air gives it consciousness and it is made firm in

worldly life and here the being gets the fruit of actions according as they are good or bad.

16. Overpowered by obstructions, one should redeem one's own self. One's own self is one's friend as well as foe. The self has nothing other than itself.

17. The nature and extent of the bondage is determined by the previous actions and the soul undergoes it in hundreds of lives.

18. It is wrong to say that everything is wrought by the world. Whatever action one does, it is all one's own.

19. The more and more the bad effect gets reduced, the more and more the thought for good works in man.

20. The soul that takes birth in the world because of its evil, can redeem itself when the effect of the evil is over.

21. One gets the mind to do good or bad according to one's action, good or bad, in the previous lives. When good actions are done, the sin and suffering are removed.

22. Good or bad, is thus acquired according as the action is proper or improper. When once the good actions alone are there, one becomes exalted among gods.

23. Heaven is the result of good actions and hell that of bad ones. There is no giver or remover of this.

Nārada said:

24. It is one's own actions that bring about good or bad results; good action paves the way for progress and bad one for downfall,

25. It behoves you to tell me how by thought, action, penance and conduct one can attain the birthless state.

Yama said:

26. I shall tell you about this sacred matter, how the sins can be dissolved and how even the bad can be made to yield good.

27-28. I first of all make obeisance to the creator of the world, who dispenses the good and the evil, who is without a beginning or end, and who is difficult to be known by gods as well as demons.

29. The man of knowledge, who knows the whole Vedas, who is calm in mind and has control of the senses and looks at all beings alike, gets absolved of all sins.

30. He who knows the truth about Puruṣa and Prakṛti and, having known it, is never deluded, attains the eternal abode.

31. He who has the capacity to discriminate between virtue and vice and between the eternal and ephemeral, and is able to get over delusion by contemplation, gets absolved of all sins.

32. He who always inquires about the pleasure and pain in oneself as well as in others, gets absolved of all sins.

33. He who never injures anything, is free from desire and anger, and is always just, gets absolved of all sins.

34. He who holds his breath by proper *prāṇāyāma* and keeps the mind steady as a result, gets absolved of all sins.

35. He who remains free from desire for everything, including such things as are naturally liked, and gives up life in tranquility, gets absolved of all sins.

36. He who is ever attentive, free from anger, free from desire for another's wealth, and free from jealousy, gets absolved of all sins.

37. He who always attends on elders, is sworn to non-violence and is never mean in his conduct, gets absolved of all sins.

38. He who performs only praiseworthy deeds and never what is not so, and always considers only the auspicious, gets absolved of all sins.

39. He who resorts to the tīrthas with purity in mind and does not commit anything bad, gets absolved of all sins.

40. He who greets a Brahmin with reverence by going towards him, gets absolved of all sins.

Nārada said:

41. What you have said is suitable, convincing, and conducive to the good of all.

42. Seeing discerning people resorting to various means, I had a doubt and that has been now cleared by you.

43. O great knower of Yoga, be pleased to tell me if there is any means still more simple for the destruction of sin.

44. The difficult practice of yoga you have already explained. What I wish to know is whether there is anything easier to practice,

45. What will be simple and pleasant and capable of removing every kind of sin,

46. What can be practised by oneself, is not very elaborate, and fully favourable for this world as well as the world beyond.

47. What is capable of exploding the effect of all bad actions that leads to birth of various kinds.

Yama said:

48. Bowing to the creator, I shall tell you about the *dharma* he has expounded in this connection.

49. Listen to this course of action which is meant for the benefit of the world and for the removal of sin.

50. He who is desirous of attaining Absoluteness, should do with a steady mind what is ordained by *dharma*.

51. He who does so with pure mind gets free from all sins and attains all desires.

52. He who makes the form of the creator in the form of the constellation Śiśumāra and bows to it with concentration of mind, gets absolved of all sins.

53. He who sees with intensity the moon in its body, gets absolved even of great sins.

54. If he sees it in the forehead, then also he is absolved of all sins, so also when he sees it in the neck or chest.

55. Seeing it in the abdomen removes all sins committed through thought, word or deed.

56. Seeing the sun in its Lāṅgala form also brings about removal of all sins committed through thought, word or deed.

57. He who performs circumambulation on seeing Jupiter in it, gets free from every kind of sin.

58. He who contemplates on him as the one without dissolution, becomes free from al sins.

59. He who performs circumambulation considering him as Mercury, Venus, Saturn, Mars and the benign Moon and contemplates on him with pure mind, becomes pure like the moon in autumn.

60. One gets absolved of all sins by a hundred prāṇāyāmas also.

61. O sage, seeing the moon in the best of form and bowing to him in reverence, removes all sins.

62-63. He who contemplates on him (by the mantra of) hundred and eight syllables and alternately sees the sun and moon in their full effulgence and purity, gets free from all sins.

64. Seeing there the Brahmin Vāmana, Varāha that arose from water holding Earth, and the Lion and bowing to them in austerity, consuming only milk, he gets absolved of all sins.

65. He who performs Prāṇāyāma also gets free from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND ELEVEN

Means to destroy sin (contd.)

The sage's son (Naciketas) said:

1. Hearing these words of the lord of *dharma*, Nārada spoke again in reverence.

Nārada said:

2. O great Dharmarāja, you look alike on all beings, stationary or moving.

3. I have now heard from you about the circumambulation which is particularly favourable to the welfare of Brahmins.

4. Three castes participate in sacrifices and share their benefits in general. The Śūdras are kept out by Brahmins from those that are purified by Vedas.

5. Since you look upon all beings as equals, you should tell me what leads to their welfare also, what action the Śūdra may do.

Yama said:

6. I shall tell you what is favourable to all the four castes as sanctioned by *dharma*.

7. I shall tell you that by listening to which with attention and following it in action, one gets free from sin. Please listen.

8. The cow is sacred, auspicious and fit to be worshipped even by gods. He who tends it with devotion, gets absolved of all sins.

9. He who drinks *Pañcagavya* at the auspicious time, immediately gets absolved of all sins acquired from birth.

10. He who receives on his head the water scattered by the

cow by its tail, acquires the merit of bathing in all tīrthas and gets free from all sins.

11. He who bathes in cow's urine on Rohiṇī day, gets all his sins burnt away.

12. He who receives on his head the milk from the cow's udder, gets cleansed of all sins.

13-14. The Brahmin, who soon after his bath bows to the rising sun with devotion, gets free from all sins.

15-16. He who worships the sun with purity and holding curd and raw rice in hand thrice a day, gets all his acquired sins dispelled.

17. A similar offering to the moon on full moon day, removes all sins.

18-19. He who makes such offering with concentration of mind and according to Vedic rules to Arundhatī, Budha and all sages, gets his sins instantaneously removed.

20. He who propitiates Brahmin, attending on him with great devotion, becomes free from all sins.

21. He who makes gifts of milk during solstices gets immediate destruction of his sins.

22. Worshipping along with Brahmins a bull over a streak of Kuśa grass strewn with tips facing east, brings about removal of all sins.

23. Bathing according to rules in an east-flowing river where it bends in a right hand direction, removes all sins.

24-25. Taking water in a right-spiralled conch and pouring it over the head with purity and pleasure, destroys all sins.

26-27. Bathing in an east-flowing river at a spot where the water is waist-deep and offering seven times handfuls of water mixed with black sesamum and performing *Prāṇāyāma* thrice with control of senses, brings about immediate destruction of all sins.

28. He who bathes thrice in water taken in untorn lotus leaves in which different gems are placed, gets free from all sins.

29. I shall tell you about another great secret. The Ekādaśī day in the dark fortnight of the Kārttika month is known as Prabodhinī. It gives both enjoyment and liberation.

30. The body of Viṣṇu with its numerous indistinct forms, O sage, became Dvādaśī in the mortal world.

31. Those who fast in the proper form with full devotion to

Lord Nārāyaṇa, get absolved of all sins acquired in numerous lives.

32. The great lord in the form of Varāha was once asked by Earth about Ekādaśī for the good of the world.

Earth said:

33. O Lord, in this fierce Kaliyuga we find people inclined to do sinful deeds like stealing the property of the Brahmin and also killing him.

34. They are inclined to do harm to the preceptor, the friend and the master and outrage the modesty of the wives of others.

35. They are drawn to steal the wealth of others, eat prohibited food and to denounce the Vedas and the Brahmins.

36. They are found to be dissemblers, not respecting decorum, proclaiming atheism, eager to receive anything even from the bad and interested in sexual relations with the prohibited.

37. Be pleased to tell me, O lord, how people who incur these and other sins can redeem themselves.

Varāha said:

38. It is good that you asked me about this. I shall tell you this secret for the sake of the world.

39. What I have ordained for those who have acquired no merit but a lot of demerit due to their great sins, I shall now tell you. Please listen.

40. The supreme power of Viṣṇu with its numerous indistinct forms, has assumed the form of Dvādaśī in the mortal world.

41. By fasting on that day, O fair one, even those who have committed serious sins go to the eternal abode, free from the effect of merits and demerits.

42. There is no means other than observing Ekādaśī for the dissolution of all sins.

43. The Ekādaśī in the bright fortnight as well as in the dark fortnight of the month should be observed. The first gives devotion and the second liberation.

44. Therefore, O Earth, every effort should be made to observe Ekādaśī always if the world of Viṣṇu is desired to attain.

45. The observance of Ekādaśī burns away all sins committed through thought, word or deed in the course of a month.

46-47. Even sins acquired earlier are dispelled. Therefore, one should not take food at all during Ekādaśī, if one wishes to go to the supreme abode of Viṣṇu.

48. With raised up hands I cry aloud that Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe, should be worshipped on Ekādaśī day without any slackness.

49. During Ekādaśī on both fortnights, water from the conch should not be drunk and fish and pig should not be killed.

50. He who takes food on either Ekādaśī in the month, incurs the same sin as of killing a Brahmin, drinking wine, stealing gold and committing adultery on the teacher's wife.

51. What sin is not incurred by the man who follows the suicidal practice of knowingly eating on Ekādaśī day?

52. He who finds it unable to fast on the Ekādaśī of the bright fortnight may eat at night whatever he gets unasked.

53. The Dvādaśī should be observed by eating once and giving gifts. He who does not observe this or does not give gifts incurs great sin and does not get liberation anywhere.

54. O fair one, those who are unable to fast at other times may do so, at least, on that Dvādaśī which is known as Prabodhinī.

55. He who worships the lord of the universe on that day, gets the merit of twelve Dvādaśīs.

56. The Dvādaśī which occurs in conjunction with the asterism Pūrvabhādrapada is great and its observance produces endless merit.

57-58. The Ekādaśī which occurs in conjunction with the asterism Uttarabhādrapada brings in a crore times the merit of others if the lord is worshipped once on that day.

59. Just like Prabodhinī (in which the lord wakes up) is the Śayanī in which the lord goes to sleep. Fasting on that day too produces abundant merit.

60. Śa··ana, Bodhana and Parivartana (Dvādaśīs on which the lord goes to sleep, wakes up and turns his side) bring about purity to man when he fasts.

61. Therefore, whoever desires permanent liberation should by all means observe fast on Dvādaśī.

62. Ekādaśī falling on Monday in conjunction with Uttarabhādrapada in the month of Kārttika gives endless merit.

63. If that is observed, it yields great results.

64. The same falling on Tuesday confers supreme merit to one who bathes and worships the lord on that day. He gets the benefit of twelve Dvādaśīs.

65. The devotee shall place at a pure spot a pot filled with water, over it a vessel of ghee containing the five gems, and

66. Over that lord Janārdana in the form of the fish made with gold weighing one niṣka.

67. He shall then bathe him with Pañcāmṛta, decorate with saffron, dress with a pair of yellow cloths and provide with umbrella and a pair of sandals.

68. He shall then worship him with lotuses keeping the senses in full control.

69. He shall worship him as the ten incarnations namely the fish, tortoise, boar, man-lion, dwarf, (Paraśu)Rāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalkī.

70. He shall do worship with every kind of decoration and offering flowers, incense, lamp and food of various kinds.

71. The lord should be released at night. When the day dawns, the devotee shall take his bath and worship him in all earnestness with flowers, incense, lamp and different kinds of fruits.

72. He shall then worship the preceptor, according to his means, with food, clothes and decorations.

73. Then the image should be gifted to him with due rites and with the mantra:

74. 'May lord Janārdana who is the source of the universe, who is in the form of the universe and who is the first in the universe, be pleased with me'.

75. The Ekādaśī is to be observed in this way. I shall tell you now, O Earth, about the merit that accrues from it.

76. The merit of Prabodhinī cannot be fully uttered even with a thousand tongues. Still, I shall tell you about it briefly.

77. The man who observes this, enters with all his dependents the celestial aerial car splendid like the sun, the moon and the stars and goes to my world.

78. At the end of a thousand *kalpas* he becomes the lord of all the seven islands constituting the earth and enjoys full health and happiness. He then becomes free from birth.

79-80. The sin of killing the Brahmin, drinking wine, steal-

ing (gold) and committing adultery on the teacher's wife, disappears by hearing the very name of this.

81. Even he who is unable to do the rites for want of money, may get himself purified and attain heaven, if he touches with devotion the man who performs them and renders him service.

82. Even by reading this account about the efficacy of this, all bad dreams disappear and all fear from worldly existence vanishes. Should we then say about the effect when the Prabodhinī is actually observed ?

83. They who worship me in the proper time are indeed blessed. They are happy. A really virtuous deed has been done by them and the essence of life has indeed been earned by them.

84. He who always takes the name of Nārāyaṇa, Acyuta, Ananta or Vāsudeva, O Earth, would merge into myself.

85. What to say of those who worship with undivided attention devotedly in accordance with the manner advised by the preceptor. They would undoubtedly be merged into myself.

86. Those who bow down to that boar-shaped Viṣṇu, possessed of unlimited energy, are always adorable even by the gods.

87. Hence, the station of Viṣṇu is to be carefully aspired by the seekers. The state of being the devotee of Viṣṇu, O pretty madam, is rarely attainable in the three worlds.

88. By virtue of propitiating lord Śiva during thousands of births, a man may attain the state of a devotee of Viṣṇu on the decay of his sins.

89. The decay of the sin is effected by the worship of lord Śiva. Rudra, the supreme lord, has to be worshipped by a person who seeks after knowledge.

90. While worshipping me, one would attain the highest station of Viṣṇu. The Vaiṣṇavites, O propitious madam, do purify the entire universe.

91. If a devotee of Viṣṇu, even though he be a Cāṇḍāla, is recollected, named, seen or touched accidentally by any body, O dear madam, the former purifies them.

92. Knowing it therefore, the learned and the wise should worship lord Viṣṇu in accordance with the Vedic rites or scriptural injunctions.

Yama said :

93-94. Having heard all this, the fortunate Earth who had her vows fulfilled, worshipped the lord of the Universe according to regulations and got merged into him. Hence, the wise man should seek for the state of a devotee of Viṣṇu with all effort.

95. Those who observe even once this Dvādaśī called Prabodhanī with due fasting, go to the supreme abode.

96. Such souls never see Yama or his messengers or the travails in hell. What I say is simply the truth.

97. I have thus told you what I have seen and heard in reply to what you asked me.

98-99. O great sage desirous of knowing *dharma*, I have now told you in brief what was said to me about this by the creator.[1]

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND TWELVE

The Awakening

Nārada said:

1. "Well, well, O great king, the great knower of all *dharma*, you have now told me about this important matter of *dharma*.

2. Remaining in the path of *dharma* spoken of by you, I am very much satisfied on hearing what you have said.

3. I feel particularly honoured by you. I shall now go to whichever world I wish to go.

4. May good befall you, O great king, be free from fear."

5. So saying, the great sage Nārada left, illumining the sky with his lustre like the sun and freely moved about in the celestial region.

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1. There is some confusion in this chapter because of the use of 'Ekādaśī' and 'Dvādaśī' as apparently relating to the same.

6-7. When he was gone, that king (Yama), turned towards me, honoured me with his sweet words and let me off very much pleased.

8. Thus have I told you, O Brahmins, about what I saw and heard in that city of Yama and how I have returned here.

Vaiśampāyana said:

9. Hearing his words, the sages became very much delighted. Some jumped up from their seats.

10. The eyes of some were filled with wonder and they gave out exclamations in appreciation.

11. Even old ascetics and those living in forest and those among them living on scattered grain, proclaimed the greatness of compassion for all beings.

12. Those lying on rocks, those lying on wood, those eating uncooked food or partly cooked food,

13. Those following prescribed rules, those who had overcome themselves, those observing full silence, those lying in water,

14. Those who were lying high up, those moving like animals, those sitting in the midst of five fires, those feeding on fallen leaves and fruits,

15. Those living on water, those living on air, those living on vegetables, all these began to do severe penance, being convinced that there is nothing greater than penance.

16. Some bold sages, being not afraid of birth or death, gave up *dharma* and *adharma* (merit and demerit) and resorted to continuous concentration of mind.

17. Hearing the narration (of Naciketas), the divine sages resorted to follow such of the rules as are commended.

18. (The father of) Naciketas, seeing his ascetic son, was immensely pleased and began to think of *dharma* alone.

19. Remaining in penance, he always contemplated on the great lord Viṣṇu extolled by the Vedas.

20-21. He who listens to this great narrative which generates devotion to the Lord, or makes others listen to it, attains his desires.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN

The greatness of Gokarṇeśvara

Sūta said:

1. In days of yore, when the manace in the form of demon Tāraka had been completely crushed in battle, and the army of the demons routed,

2. Indra had been restored to his position, the enemy being annihilated, and the world of animate and inanimate beings had become fully productive,

3. And in the golden peak of the Meru full of gems,

4. Brahmā was sitting in comfort with full concentration effulgent like the sun and fire,

5. Sanatkumāra approached him with great humility, prostrated at his feet in reverence, and asked him.

Sanatkumāra said:

6. "O lord, I wish to know from you about an old thing which the sages cherish, namely,

7. How is the northern Gokarṇa, how the southern, how is it placed at the top of the peak,

8. Of what dimension is that place, what is the merit of the tīrtha there, how is there Lord Śiva in the form of an animal,

9. How did gods led by you reach there, where is the animal form of his consecrated, and

10. What are the special rules to be observed there. Be pleased to tell me all this."

11. Thus asked by the son, lord Brahmā told him about his old and secret matter.

Brahmā said:

12. O sage, my son, I shall tell you this secret truth, as I have heard it.

13. On the northern side of the great mountain Mandara, there is a peak called Muñjavān, beautiful like the Nandana garden.

14. It has pebbles shining, stones resembling coral and slabs like sapphire and many caves and waterfalls.

15. With its rising rocks covered with creepers bearing a variety of blossoms, it seems to scrape the sky.

16. The caves in it are beautiful with numerous flowing minerals and flowers of mushrooms.

17. The streaks of forests in it shine with the flowers of Jasmine and Ketakī.

18. In that mount washed by streams of pure water blue like sapphire, having stretches of slabs covered with many kinds of flowers.

19. Displaying a variety of colours as in the rainbow and so appearing like the abode of Kubera,

20. With celestial couples playing, groups of Apsarases dancing and inebriated peacocks cooing,

21. With ponds full of clear water and having full-blown flowers of lotus and Kalhāra and resorted to by swans and cranes,

22. With numerous brooks flocked by herds of elephants, dear, birds and many sages,

23. With groves enjoyed by Devas, Gandharvas and Vidyādharas, where the cuckoos warble and the hollows resound with the music of Kinnaras,

24. With numerous waterfalls and green meadows illumined by natural glow,

25. Natural gardens full of flowers blossoming in all seasons and resorted to by Kiṁpuruṣas and Guhyakas,

26. With very attractive and auspicious penance-groves of sages and Siddhas,

27. There remains always lord Maheśvara as Sthāṇu, the preceptor of all gods, granting boons.

28. He remains there accompanied by Pārvatī, Guha and attendants, full of grace for the devotees.

29. The gods used to go there in their aerial cars to pay homage to that great lord. The demigods also used to go there for his worship.

30. Once in Tretāyuga, a great sage named Nandī began to perform severe penance in order to propitiate Śiva.

31-32. Sitting in the midst of five fires in summer, standing in cold water in winter, with hands raised and remaining without support, feeding on water and air alone, and observing numerous vows and restraints,

33. And with Japa and offerings of flowers from time to time, he worshipped Śiva with great devotion.

34. He fully engaged himself in severe penance, as a result of which he became much emaciated and almost looked like a piece of wood.

35. He became very lean and dark in complexion. Thus worshipped, Śiva was pleased.

36-37. Śiva then appeared before the sage and told him, "I am pleased with you and I give you divine eyes with which to see my form which is visible only to those with the highest knowledge."

38. Seeing the great lord Mahādeva shedding lustre like a thousand suns, with a blazing halo around him,

39. With prominent matted hair adorned by the moon, surveying the whole universe with his three shining eyes,

40. Very attractive with hundred heads, hundred bellies, thousand hands and feet, thousand eyes and mouths,

41. Smaller than the smallest, bigger than the biggest, wearing the rosary and holding the water-vessel in hand,

42. Wearing the skin of lion and serpent for Yajñopavīta, the sage became thrilled.

43. He prostrated before him with folded hands and uttered a hymn in praise.

"Bow to the creator, dispenser, granter of boons, Śambhu,

44. The enjoyer of the world, three-eyed, Śaṅkara, Śiva, Bhava, the protector from worldly existence, sage, wearer of elephant's skin,

45. Blue-necked, Bhīma, the combiner of the past, present and future, with hanging brows, ferocious, auspicious,

46. With broad, matted and tawny hair, the wise, holding the trident, lord of beasts, omnipresent, Sthāṇu,

47. Lord of Gaṇas, the creator, condenser and frightener, who is calm and benign,

48. The resident of the cemetery, Rudra, the benevolent, wearing a garland of skulls and tawny moustache,

49. Lover of devotees, I bow to you the supreme soul."

50. Thus praising Śiva, he bowed to him again and again.

51. Śiva was very much pleased with him and spoke to him.

52. "O great sage, seek from me whatever boons you wish. I shall grant you all of them, even if they are such as are not normally granted.

53. Tell me soon what you desire, whether it is lordship, the status of Devas, Indra or Brahmā, the position of the guardian deities, liberation, eight-fold power or leadership of Gaṇas.

54. Asked thus, the sage replied with great delight.

55-56. "I don't desire lordship, the status of Devas, Indra or Brahmā, the position of the Guardian deities, liberation, the eight-fold power or leadership of Gaṇas.

57. O great god Śaṅkara, if you are pleased with me and wish to favour me,

58. Please give me that kind of devotion which will make me worship you alone and none else.

59. I wish to have devotion for you who dwell in the minds of all. Let there be no impediment in this. I wish to worship you with the *Rudra mantra* a crore times."

60. Hearing these words of Nandin, lord Maheśvara laughed and then spoke in sweet words.

61. "O sage, I am pleased with you. Rise from your penance. I am fully propitiated by your pure mind and constant devotion.

62. Enough of this penance. You have been deeply devoted to my feet.

63. You have already recited three crores of *Rudra mantra* before me.

64. You have completed, O sage, thousand years of severe penance, the like of which neither Devas nor Asuras nor sages have ever done.

65. You have done something difficult and wonderful as a result of which the three worlds are awed.

66. All Devas led by Indra will come to see you. You have become eternal and fully knowable by Devas or Asuras.

67. With your divine body and divine ornaments you have become equal to me.

68. You will get a form and splendour like mine, three-eyed and endowed with all virtues and worshipped by Devas and Asuras.

69. With this body which will be free from age and death, you will also be the lord of Gaṇas.

70. O Brahmin, you will be the foremost among my attendants and will be known as Nandīśvara.

71. O sage, you have attained the eightfold power and Devas will bow to you as my second form.

72. Hereafter, O sage, by my blessing you will be the chief in all matters relating to Devas.

73. As the chief of my attendants, you will be worshipped by all beings that desire my favour.

74. You will be the dispenser of boons in this world and the refuge for the fear-stricken.

75. He who hates you hates me, he who worships you worships me. There is no difference between us just as there is none between the sky and air.

76. O lord of Gaṇas, you should stand on the right of my door-way and Mahākāla on the left.

77. You will be the principal doorkeeper. You are to guard me and Mahākāla is to guard the Gaṇas.

78. None will be able to injure you in the three worlds whether by the Vajra, Cakra, fire or Cane.

79. Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, and Pannagas will resort to you, so too men who are my devotees.

80. When you are pleased, I will be pleased and when you are angry, I too. There is none more dear to me than you."

81. Being thus pleased with him and after giving him these boons, Śiva spoke to him again in clear tone which filled the air.

82. "See gods together with the Maruts come here to see you. You have now become fully gratified.

83. If the words I spoke giving you the boons have not yet entered into your ear, see these gods in the sky here.

84. The gods and Maruts led by lord Viṣṇu come here out of love and regard for you. Sages will come here to get boons.

85-86. Yakṣas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Pannagas and sages who are already immersed in penance, knowing about what you have accomplished by penance, engage themselves in various kinds of severe penance with a desire to gain similar boons.

87-88. Before they come here knowing me to be present in this peak Muñjavān, I shall go away from here.

89. I have to see Brahmā and other gods who are waiting for my blessing. I know what they have in mind."

90. Thus blessing him and giving him boons, he disappeared from there.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN

Boons to Nandikeśvara

Brahmā said :

1. When Śiva, the lord of beings, disappeared, Nandī became the leader of Gaṇas and divine in form,

2. With four arms, three eyes, divine demeanour, divine complexion and divine Agaru-like odour,

3. Having trident, spear, club, the bow pināka and girdle of Muñja grass and full of lustre like another Śiva.

4. With his raised foot he seemed to be aiming at pervading the whole universe like Trivikrama.

5. Seeing him, the gods became afraid and they rushed in great hurry to inform Indra.

6. Hearing this, Indra and others in his city became perturbed and began to think about what they might do.

7. "Here is some one who has got a boon from Maheśvara, and with his great might he is sure to get control over all the worlds.

8. His enthusiasm, effulgence and strength will enable him to snatch away the place of celestials.

9. Before he sets foot on this celestial world for the purpose through his power, let us go and propitiate the benign Śiva himself who has given him the boon."

10. So saying, they went with me to mount Muñjavân made by the gods.

11. Myself, Viṣṇu, Indra and others rushed there in anxiety.

12. The gods and sages began looking for him. Then Viṣṇu, along with them, went to the spot where Nandī was remaining like a god.

Nandī said:

13. My life has become fruitful as also all my efforts since I see before me Indra, the lord of gods, and Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds.

14. This is enough for me and I am fully gratified.

15. The great lord Hara became pleased with me, gave me a place among his attendants and blessed me with boons.

16. This is a greater blessing for me and I have become extremely purified.

17. What Brahmā told gods about me is absolutely true. Now the gods and sages have come here and speak sweet words to me. This shows Brahmā's affection for me.

Devas said:

18. "We wish to see the benevolent god Śiva who appeared before you pleased by your penance".

19. They asked him again, "Where can we find lord Śiva ?"

Nandī said:

20. "After blessing me, the lord disappeared there itself. I do not know where he is. A search may be made".

Sanatkumāra said:

21. Please tell me what the Lord had told Nandī since he did not disclose where he was. Was there any secret for Śiva in this matter ?

Brahmā said:

22. I shall tell you what Maheśvara said to Nandī regarding why the gods should not be told as to where he could be seen. Please listen.

Śiva said:

23. "Beyond Himālaya there is a nice and holy place with numerous hermitages. There a great serpent by name Śleṣmātaka lives.

24. He has now freed himself of all sins by penance and so I have now to go there urgently to bless him.

25. The place around him there is very beautiful and (strangely) there are no monkeys there.[1]

26. Due to the long penance he performed there, it has now come to be known as Śleṣmātaka forest and even the rocks there have become sacred.

27. I will be moving there in the form of a deer and I will see then the gods who finally come there wearied after a long search.

28. You should not tell this to Devas or Apsarases". Saying so and blessing him he disappeared from there.

29-30. Indra reached that table-land in his chariot which moves at will, beautiful like the crescent moon and sprinkled with divine drops, accompanied by the Maruts and followed by the gods, shedding lustre all around.

31. The benevolent Varuṇa, the lord of aquatic animals came in an aerial car splendid with crystals and diamonds, together with his followers.

32. Kubera came there in another beautiful golden car.

33. In numerous such cars shining like the sun came in crores of Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.

1. This seems to be an interpolated verse. In the next chaper we find the mention of monkey here.

34. Yama came there along with the good souls. The sun, moon, planets and the entire group of stars arrived there in aerial cars shining like fire.

35. *The eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas and Aśvins came* to that great mountain Muñjavān.

36. The Viśvedevas, Sādhyas and the ascetic Bṛhaspati came there covering the milky way.

37. Skanda and Vināyaka came to the great peak full of cooings of numerous peacocks.

38-39. At the command of Indra came there also in aerial cars Gandharva leaders like Viśvāvasu, Parāvasu, Hāhā and Hūhū and also sages like Nārada and Tumburu.

40. Vāyu, Agni, Dharma, Dhruva, the divine sages, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Vidyādharas, Guhyakas all arrived there.

41-42. Celestial women like Gandhakālī, Ghṛtācī, Buddha, Gaurī, Tilottamā, Urvaśī, Menakā and Rambhā flocked there.

43-45. At my bidding and also at the bidding of Viṣṇu and Indra, came the sages Pulastya, Atri, Marīci, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, Kaśyapa, Pulaha, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Bharadvāja, Agniveśya, Parāśara, Mārkaṇḍeya, Aṅgiras, Garga, Saṁvarta, Kratu, Jamadagni, Bhārgava and Cyavana.

46-49. Also came there great rivers like Sindhu, Puruṣa, Sarayū, Tāmrā, Aruṇā, Cārubhāgā, Vitasthā, Kauśikī, Sarasvatī, Kokā, Narmadā, Bāhudā, Śatadrū, Vipāśā, Gaṇḍakī, Godāvarī, Veṇī, Tāpī, Karatoyā, Śītā, Cīravatī, Nandā, Paranandā, Carmaṇvatī, Parṇāśā, and Daivikā.

50-52. At Indra's instance came there in large numbers tīrthas like Gaṅgā, Prabhāsa; Puruṣa. Soma and Lohita and even the ocean, all in their own forms.

53-55. All the mountains also presented themselves, Meru, Kailāsa, Gandhamādana, Himavān, Hemakūṭa, Niṣadha, Vindhya, Mahendra, Sahya, Malaya, Dardura, Mālyavān, Citrakūṭa, Droṇa, Śrīparvata, Pāriyātra and others.

56. So too all sacrifices, all kinds of knowledge, all the Vedas, Righteousness, Truth, Forbearance, Heaven and the great sage Kapila.

57-63. There came the great Vāsukī, the serpent (Rāhu) who drank nectar, Ananta, the holder of earth with his thousand hoods, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Kirmīraṅga, Ambodhara, the mighty Arbuda, Vidyujjihva, Śaṅkhavarcas, Nahuṣa known in the three

worlds, Satya, the son of Virocana with numerous brilliant spots, Rūpī like a mountain having numerous peaks, Arimejaya, Vinata, Kambala, Aśvatara, Elāpatra, Karkoṭaka, Dhanañjaya and several other lords of serpents.

64. Arrived there Day and Night, Fortnight, Month, Year, Heaven, Earth, Quarters and Subquarters.

65. Thus swelled the mountain peak with Devas, Yakṣas, Siddhas and others everywhere like the ocean in high tide.

66. Wafted by the wind, the trees showered flowers over the gods assembled in the peak.

67. The Gandharvas sang, Apsarases danced and the birds warbled in delight.

68. The wind was blowing gently and fragrant and pleasant.

69. When all the gods flocked there led by Viṣṇu, they saw the resplendent Nandī in front of them.

70. Seeing the Gandharvas, Apsarases and other celestials there with Indra, he prostrated before them.

71. After saluting all of them, he spoke to them words of welcome, offered *arghya* and *pādya* and requested them to be seated.

72. Watching all this carefully, the gods began to return him the honour.

73. The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Maruts, Aśvins, Sādhyas, Viśvedevas, Gandharvas and Guhyakas honoured him.

74. All Gandharvas like Viśvāvasu, Hāhā, Hūhū, Citrasena and others and Nārada and Tumburu honoured him.

75. All the chiefs of serpents like Vāsuki honoured Nandī.

76. Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Vidyā(dharas) and Apsarases honoured him who was already honoured by the great lord.

77. The Siddhas, sages and rivers like Gaṅgā blessed him in great joy.

The gods said:

78. "O sage, let the great god Śiva be always pleased with you. Let there be unhindered supremacy for you.

79. You are now greater than gods.

80. You will be moving about in all the seven worlds together with Śiva without disease or death."

81. Thus said by the gods, Nandī spoke again.

Nandikeśvara said:

82. "Now that I am blessed by you all with your benedictions, I have become one worthy of commands from you. Please tell me what I may do for you.

83. O great gods, let me know your command". Hearing this, Indra said:

Indra said:

84. "Where is the great lord Śiva gone ? Where can we see him ?

85. If you know where he is, please tell us soon, O sage".

86. Hearing these words of Indra, Nandī replied contemplating on Śiva for a while.

Nandikeśvara said:

87. O lord of gods, you deserve to know this.

88. In this mountain Muñjavān, I worshipped lord Sthāṇu. He was pleased with me and gave me several boons.

89. Then he left this place and I am afraid to find out where he has gone.

90. But if you so desire, O Indra, we shall make a search for him."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

Greatness of Śaileśvara[1]

Brahmā said:

1. Then Indra and all other gods decided to start on a search of Śiva.

2. They all rose from the mountain and moved in the sky along with Nandī.

3. Wishing to find out Rudra, they moved about in heavens, in the world of Brahmā and in the world of serpents.

1. In the text this is given as Jaleśvara.

4. Searching him in all the seven islands of the earth with their mountains and forests, they became extremely tired, but could not trace him.

5-6. Not a blade of grass was left out in their intensive search in the caves of mountains and in their high peaks, in the bowers and woods.

7. But nowhere could they know anything about his whereabouts.

8. They searched again in spite of disappointment, but became afraid when they could not find him still.

9. Then they discussed among themselves about their predicament and decided again to seek my help.

10. I then entered into single-minded concentration on Śiva in order to get a means for finding out where he was.

11. Then I told them that a serious search has been made everywhere except the Śleṣmātaka forest and we may now go there.

12. When said thus, they all agreed and we proceeded to that place.

13. Soon we reached there in quickly moving aerial cars and saw the Śleṣmātaka forest resorted to by Siddhas and Cāraṇas.

14. There were in it many beautiful and pure places for meditation.

15. Near the penance groves and the caves there were beautiful streaks of forests and brooks with clear water.

16. The place was full of sounds of lions, tigers, bisons, bears, bulls, monkeys, elephants and deer.

17-18. Leaving the chariots and other vehicles, they all walked to the place led by Indra with a view to finding out Rudra anywhere in the caves, peaks or thickets.

19-21. As the gods entered one part of the forest full of plantain groves and flowering trees, they saw a stream and in its sands white like the swan, jasmine and moon, smelling sweet with the fragrance of flowers and honey, a beautiful damsel playing in the sand resembling powdered pearl.

22. Seeing this, they asked me, being the first among them, how this could be.

23. Meditating for a while, I could know that she was none other than Umā, the universal goddess, the daughter of Himavān.

24. Then they all climbed up the peak, and on looking down, saw the great lord (Śiva) there.

25. He was in the midst of a herd of deer as if their protector, having but one horn and one foot, lustrous like molten gold,

26. With beautiful face, eyes and teeth, having white dotes on the back, silverwhite on the belly,

27. With stout and raised up waist and neck and bent shoulders, rosy lips, brown tongue and slightly projecting canines.

28. Seeing that deer, all the gods quickly descended there to catch hold of it.

29. The tip of its horn was caught by Indra, the middle by me and the lower part by Viṣṇu.

30. Then the horn broke into three pieces.

31. The tip was in the hand of Indra, the middle in mine and lower part in Viṣṇu's hand.

32. When the horn was thus in our hands in three pieces, the lord naturally became hornless.

33. He instantly became invisible and spoke to us from the sky. "O gods, know that you are deceived by me.

34. I am here with my body. You got my horn alone. So I say you are deceived.

35. If you had caught hold of me with the entire body and placed me then the whole *dharma* with its four feet would have been established.

36. Now, O you gods, you may install the pieces of the horn here in this Śleṣmātaka forest for the sake of the world.

37. There will be great sanctity in this place because of my prowess.

38. For my sake the tīrthas in the world and rivers and the sea will make their presence here.

39. I will emerge by myself from earth in holy Nepal at the foot of the Himālaya,

40. With four faces and resplendent head and body, known as Śarīreśa in all the three worlds.

41. There I will remain within the water in the deep pond known as Nāgahrada for thirty thousand years.

42. When Kṛṣṇa who will be born in the clan of the Vṛṣṇis, smashes the mountain with his disc at the request of Indra, and kills demons, then that place will become peopled by the Mlecchas.

43. Then the Kṣatriyas born in the solar race will kill them and settle Brahmins there.

44. They will then establish in that country *dharma* permanently.

45. The Kṣatriya kings of the solar race will establish in the void the worship of liṅga.

46. The place will then become great with Brahmins and all other castes observing different āśramas in life.

47. The kings will do their duty well by *dharma*.

48. In that place thus well settled, every being will always worship me. Those who see me in that form or duly worship me there, will go to my abode and see me there, being freed from all sins.

49. Fourteen yojanas of land to the north of Gaṅgā and south of Aśvinīmukha is my region.

50. River Vāgmatī rising from the peaks of Himālaya is a hundred times more sacred than Gaṅgā.

51. Those who bathe there reach my world through the world of Viṣṇu after death.

52. Even sinners who live in this place, certainly go to the world of Indra.

53-54. The gods, demons, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Apsarases, sages, Yakṣas and others are deluded by my *māyā*, and so they are unable to know where I am.

55. This is known as Siddhakṣetra and is frequented by ascetics for penance. It is superior to Prabhāsa, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Puṣkara and Kurukṣetra.

56. The great Himavān, my father-in-law is here.

57. From here arise great rivers like Gaṅgā. In this holy place all rivers are sacred, all springs are sacred, all rocks are sacred.

58. A hermitage resorted to by Siddhas and Cāraṇas will arise here and the spot where I remain will be known as Śaileśvara.

59. The river Vāgmatī flowing from here is very sacred, and (like) river Gaṅgā, cleanses one of all sins.

60. The utterance of its name brings about purification, its sight confers prosperity, and drinking its water and bathing in it liberates ten generations in the family.

61. Those who bathe in this famous tīrtha are never reborn after their death.

62. I raise from the ocean of worldly life those that bathe here every day and worship me.

63-64. He who takes from here at least one pot of water with devotion and purity of mind, gets the result of performing Agnihotra, particularly if he is learned in Veda and Vedāṅga.

65. A spring will arise there because of me. It will be known as Mṛgaśṛṅgodaka and it will be a favourite of ascetics.

66. Those who bathe there with concentration of mind will get free from all sins they commit.

67. Those who bathe in the tīrtha Pañcanada here gain the merit of performing Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

68. Those who guard Vāgmatī (against defilment) get (the merit of gifting) six thousand cows.

69. The sinful or the ungrateful shall not go to Vāgmatī, but only the pure, the honest and the devoted.

70. The afflicted, the fear-stricken, the tormented and the diseased get beatitude by bathing in Vāgmatī.

71. Those who bathe in Vāgmatī and see me in devotion, get great peace of mind.

72. By my power the sins of those who bathe here disappear and natural calamities do not affect them.

73. Those who bathe in the Vāgmatī (in the particular tīrthas) get the result of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

74. The place (actually occupied) by me (Rudra) should be taken as one yojana.

75. At the north-eastern side remains the great serpent Vāsuki surrounded by thousands of other serpents.

76. He will obstruct persons coming to this place.

77. He should be first saluted. Then there will be no difficulty for those coming here.

78. He who worships me here in full devotion, becomes a king in this world honoured by all.

79. He who worships my idol here with sandal and garlands, becomes a god.

80. He who offers me a lamp in this mountain with due devotion, will be born as a solar deity.

81. He who renders me service with vocal or instrumental music or dance, uttering praise and keeping awake at night, becomes my own.

82. He who bathes me with milk, curd, ghee, honey or water, overcomes old age and death.

83. He who feeds Brahmins in Śrāddha with due attention (here) becomes a god honoured by Indra.

84-85. Those who propitiate me through vows, pilgrimages, offerings of food and offerings in fire with attention, remain in heaven for sixty thousand years and are then born in this world in all prosperity.

86. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, and women who resort with devotion to Śaileśvara here, get the position of my attendants.

87. Śaileśvara is the supreme secret, Śaileśvara is the supreme resort. There is no place superior to Śaileśvara on earth.

88. Even the man who has incurred the sins of killing a Brahmin, killing a teacher or killing a cow, gets purified by coming to this place.

89. There are various tīrthas here with various deities, and the touch of water in them removes all sins.

90. There is the tīrtha called Krośodaka built by the gods by condensing the form extending over a krośa.

91. By bathing there with purity, self-control and truthfulness, all sins disappear and abundant merit is achieved.

92. There is Anāśaka to the south of Śaileśvara and the person who goes there gets beatitude.

93. He who throws himself down from there without desire or anger, goes in an aerial car to heaven surrounded by Apsarases.

94. At the bottom of the precipice there is a tīrtha known as Brahmodbheda built by Brahmā. Know what merit it gives.

95. He who bathes there for one year with control of senses, doubtless goes to the world of Brahmā.

96. There is the Gorakṣaka dug by the feet of cows and bulls. Seeing it procures the benefit of a thousand cows.

97-98. By going to the peak there called Gaurīśikhara resorted to by Siddhas and seeing, touching or bowing to the universal mother Pārvatī who remains there for protecting the world, one attains her own world.

99. He who throws himself down from there to the bank of Vāgmatī, quickly goes to her world in an aerial car.

100. He who bathes in the pond called Umāstanakuṇḍa becomes lustrous like fire and goes to the world of Skanda.

101. By bathing in Pañcanada resorted to by great sages, the merit of Agnihotra is obtained.

102. He who makes others bathe there, will be reborn with memory of his previous lives.

103. To the north of this is another tīrtha resorted to by the pious called Prāntakapāniya guarded by Guhyakas.

104. He who bathes there for one year, becomes a Guhyaka and an attendant of Rudra.

105. To the north-east of this temple of Pārvatī and to the south of Vāgmatī, there is a holy tīrtha called Brahmodaya into which water flows from a cave.

106. By touching its water, sprinkling it over the body or bathing in it, one avoids seeing the world of death and is never put to any misery.

107. By bathing with due rites in the Sundarikātīrtha, one attains beauty and brilliance.

108. By worshipping Sandhyā there during the three times of the day, a Brahmin gets free from all sins.

109-110. The pure Brahmin who remains for a whole day and reciting Rudrādhyāya at the confluence of Vāgmatī and Maṇivatī, becomes a learned man well-versed in Vedas and liberates his entire family.

111. Even if a person belonging to an inferior caste bathes there and offers water with sesamum, no doubt, propitiates his manes.

112. By bathing anywhere in the Vāgmatī, one avoids taking birth as an animal, and becomes born in an affluent family.

113. The wise man may go to this confluence of Vāgmatī and Maṇivatī with his mind free from desire and anger.

114. And bathing there, he will acquire ten times the merit of bathing in the place of the emergence of Gaṅgā.

115. This is frequented by Vidyādharas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, sages, gods, Yakṣas and serpents for bath.

116. Even a little money given to Brahmins here, produces eternal merit.

117. The deities should be worshipped here with all effort, because there is no holy place superior to this.

118-119. In this holy Śleṣmātaka forest resorted to by the gods, wherever I have, in my form as deer, moved about, stood, slept or played, all that has become particularly sacred.

120. This horn broken into three will become famous in the world as Gokarṇeśvara.

121-122. Thus telling gods, the great Lord, still remaining invisible to them, bounded to the north.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN

Greatness of Śṛṅgeśvara

Brahmā said:

1-2. When the great lord Tryambaka in the form of deer left, the gods were consulting one another and me as to where the three parts of the horn could be duly consecrated.

3. Indra installed the tip in one place. I installed the middle part also in the same place.

4. Devas, Devarṣis, Brahmarṣis and Siddhas proclaimed it as Gokarṇa.

5. Then Viṣṇu installed the base of the horn in Devatīrtha. It then came to be known as Śṛṅgeśvara.

6. When the three parts were thus installed in two places, the Lord bestowed two (of his hundred parts), one on each.

7. In the deer he had divided his energy into hundred parts. Two of these were bestowed on the three parts of the horn.

8. With the rest of the deer form, the Lord went to the foot of the Himālaya.

9. To worship the Lord in these three pieces of the horn is to get hundred times the benefit of worshipping him elsewhere.

10. Devas and Asuras worshipped him with severe penance and got many boons.

11. Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakṣas and Uragas went round the whole Śleṣmātaka region in pilgrimage.

12. Proclaiming the benefits of that region and of the tīrthas therein, they returned from there to their own places.

13-14. When the gods had left, Rāvaṇa with his brothers and other Rākṣasas came there and began to worship the great Lord Gokarṇeśvara with severe penance.

15. Śiva became pleased with him and offered him boons.

16. He sought the boon of victory for him in the three worlds.

17. Getting it from the great Lord, he immediately set out for the conquest of the three worlds.

18. He conquered the three worlds and defeating Indra, pulled out the tip of the horn installed by him and carried it away along with his son Indrajit.

19. On the way, Rāvaṇa placed it on the shore of the ocean for a while and went for performing Sandhyopāsanā.

20. When he returned he found that it had fixed itself on the ground.

21. His attempt to pull it out with all his might simply failed because it had so strongly cemented itself, and so leaving it there, he returned to Laṅkā.

22. That place came to be known as Dakṣiṇagokarṇa (Southern Gokarṇa) where Śiva, the lord of all beings, consecrated himself.

23-24. Thus have I told you in detail about Uttaragokarṇa, Dakṣiṇagokarṇa, Śṛṅgeśvara and Śaileśvara and how the Lord came to be in each of these places.

25. I have told you, O son, about the greatness of these places and tīrthas there. What else do you wish to know?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

Benefits of Recitation

Sanatkumāra said:

1-2. You have cleared all my doubts after well thinking about them a lot and told me about Lord Śiva of universal form and unmatched glory who took the form of the deer and also about the installation of its horn and the body in holy places for the good of the world.

3. Now you may be pleased to tell me about the significance of this.

Brahmā said:

4. Whatever there is still to be told, will be narrated by Pulastya.

5. He will say that before the sages in the Kuru country. He will say about the importance of all tīrthas.

6. O my son, you are equal to me and have known the true essence of Vedas and Vedāṅgas. (By listening to what I have said) one gets cleansed of all sins, attains fame and becomes honoured in this world as well as in the world beyond.

7. This should always be listened to by people of all castes.

8. It is sacred and auspicious and brings about Dharma, Karma and Artha and all prosperity, long life and success everywhere.

9. It removes all sins and bestows wealth, fame, happiness and peace. So by listening to it one gets free from all that is bad and evil.

10. By getting it recited, one gets over the effects of Kali age and goes to heaven.

Sūta said:

11. Having thus told Sanatkumāra, the great lord Brahmā retired.

12. O virtuous ones, I have thus told you in essence the conversation between Varāha and Bhūmi.

13. He who recites this or listens to it with devotion, becomes free from all sins and gets beatitude.

14. This confers a crore times the merit acquired in Prabhāsa, Naimiṣāraṇya, Gaṅgādvāra, Puṣkara, Prayāga, Brahmatīrtha and Amarakaṇṭaka.

15. The merit of gifting a cow is acquired by listening even to one chapter of it.

16. Listening to ten chapters with attention confers the merit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices.

17-18. He who listens always to the narration of utterances of Varāha acquires the merit of all sacrifices, all gifts and all tīrthas.

19. Varāha himself has declared: "He who listens with devotion to the narration of this greatness of mine gets sons if he has none, and also good grandsons".

20. He who keeps in his house a written copy of this, always gets the favour of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

21. He who always listens to it with deep devotion,

22. And performs pūjā to the work as for the great Viṣṇu with sandal, flowers and clothes and feeds Brahmins,

23. And the king who does so with gifts of villages according to his capacity, and honours well the discourser of the Purāṇa,

24. Become free from all sins and attain merger in Lord Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN

Contents of the Purāṇa

1. This Purāṇa spoken by Varāha was written at Kāśī by Mādhavabhaṭṭa with the assistance of Vīreśvara in the Vikrama year one thousand six hundred and seventythree.

2. The contents of the Varāhapurāṇa are now given. First the occasion is mentioned and then the primordial origin.

3. Primary creation is then detailed followed by the story of Durjaya and place of narration and rules of Śrāddha.

4. In the narration of old legends we get the story of Saramā and the story of Mahātapas.

5. Then the origin of Agni, Aśvins, Gaurī, Vināyaka and Nāgas,

6. The origin of Skanda and Sūrya are given, followed by the origin of Devī.

7. Then we get the origin of Kubera, the determination of relative priority, and the origin of Dharma and Rudra,

8. Then the secret of the origin of Soma and briefly the origin of earth, then the ancient legend and the story of the hunter.

9. Then is the story of Satyatapas and later the rules for observance of Matsyadvādaśī, Kūrmadvādaśī, Varāhadvādaśī,

10. Nṛsiṁhadvādaśī, Vāmanadvādaśī, Bhārgavadvādaśī, Śrīrāmadvādaśī,

11. Kṛṣṇadvādaśī, Buddhadvādaśī, Kalkidvādaśī and Padmanābhadvādaśī.

12. Dharaṇīvrata, Agastyagītā, the story of Paśupāla and the Vrata for obtaining a good husband follow.

13. Then are given Śubhavrata, Dhanyavrata, Kāntivrata, Saubhāgyavrata, Avighnavrata,

14. Śāntivrata, Kāmavrata, Ārogyavrata, Putraprāptivrata, Śauryavrata and Sārvabhaumavrata,

15. The glorification of Purāṇa, the praise of Lord Nārāyaṇa by Lord Śiva, Rudragītā, and the determination of Prakṛti and Puruṣa.

16. Then follow the descriptions of the universe, the limits of Jambūdvīpa.

17. The extent of Bhārata and the various things there. Then we get the conversation between Nārada and Mahiṣa,

18. The account of the greatness of Śakti and the killing of Mahiṣāsura, followed by the description of Rudra's glory and the Parvādhyāya.

19. Then occurs Śvetopākhyāna. This is followed by the rites of Tiladhenu, Jaladhenu, Rasadhenu, Guḍadhenu,

20. Śarkarādhenu, Madhudhenu, Dadhidhenu, Lavaṇadhenu, Kārpāsadhenu and Dhānyadhenu.

21. Then we get the nature of devotion to the Lord, the praise of Lord Viṣṇu and the numerous questions put to him.

22. The nature of the devotees is then described, as also the nature of joy and sorrow and the thirtytwo offences in worship.

23. The rules and the mantras for worship are then given and also for permitted and prohibited food and the rules for Sandhyopāsana.

24. Observances for freedom from rebirth, the greatness of Kokāmukha, the importance of sandal and flower in worshipping the lord,

25. Māyācakra, the greatness of Kubjāmraka, the rules relating to different castes,

26. And the mantras for offering collyrium and mirror follow.

27. The expiations for eating the king's food, for not cleaning teeth, for touching dead body, for non-utterance of mantras,

28. For wearing blue cloth, worshipping with anger, for wearing red cloth, for worshipping in darkness,

29. For wearing black cloth or unclean cloth, for eating meat like pork,

30. For worshipping with the stain of the burnt oil in the lamp in hand, for going to the cremation ground,

31. For eating oil cake, for worshipping with foot-wear on, for not observing what is laid down by Śāstra are then stated.

32. Then follow the account of the greatness of Sūkara-kṣetra, the story of jackal and the eagle, and that of Khañjarīṭa,

33. The greatness of Kokāmukha again and of Badarī, the importance of secret worship, the greatness of Mandāra and Guhya tīrthas and of Śālagrāma,

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37. Mathurātīrtha and its origin, Yamunātīrtha, Akrūra-tīrtha are given.

38. Then occur the accounts of Devāraṇya, Cakratīrtha, Kapila, Govardhana,

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41. This is followed by rules for installation of idols for worship made of wood, stone or clay,

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44. Then we get the importance of Madhuparka, the description of Saṁsāracakra, the miseries of evil and pleasures of good,

45. The torments inflicted by Yama's men, the various hells,

46. The transformations consequent on the nature of actions, and sinful deeds.

47. The account of good and bad, the allurements in life and the wonderful story of Nimi are then given.

48. The sacred story of Gokarṇeśvara, the boons to Nandī, the greatness of Jaleśvara, Śaileśvara and Śṛṅgeśvara are then narrated.

49. By listening to this Anukramaṇikā, one attains the merit of listening to the Varāhapurāṇa.

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